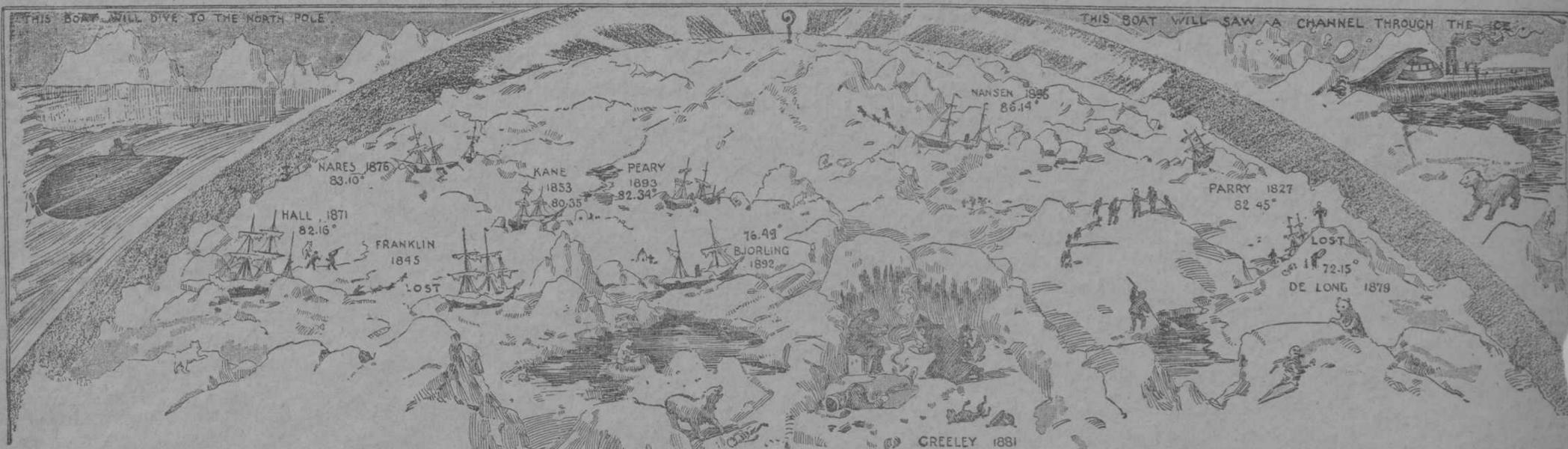


A Record-Breaking Year for—1897—Arctic and Antarctic Expeditions



THE NORTH POLE STILL HOLDS ITS ARCTIC SECRET.

DESPITE THE EFFORTS OF MANY BRAVE AND LEARNED MEN.

The North Pole and the South Pole will, in this new year of 1897, be the goal of the explorer and the destination of the scientist. More expeditions whose aim will be to penetrate their mysteries and add a few indefinite miles to the now terra incognita of the world will start in 1897 than in any previous year.

The South Pole this year looms up as the most fascinating scene of operations for the explorer. Three expeditions are announced as preparing to start. At the head of one will be the Norwegian, Borchgrevink, who a year or two ago retraced the path: point south and made a landing on the Antarctic continent, bringing back marvelous tales of what he saw there.

Another South Pole expedition will be fitted out by the Belgian Government, under the command of Lieutenant Gerlache. A third Antarctic expedition is being planned by the American Society of Naturalists, with Professor Hellprin and Professor Cope as a committee.

The North Pole will again be the point of attack by Andree, with his balloon. Andree, it will be remembered, essayed to reach the Pole in this manner in 1895, but gave it up, owing to adverse conditions.

M. Pesce, a Frenchman, has announced his intention to tempt fate in the ice-bound North with a wonderful boat that will dive under the ice floes and skim over the open water whenever there is any. And a company of Englishmen are building a fast steamship with a rotary ice saw in her bow which will tear out a channel in the ice pack.

Nansen, who in 1896 broke the North Polar record, will, it is thought, make another attempt, but whether toward the north or the south is not yet known. All things considered, we shall see in 1897 a new era in the exploration of the far ends of the earth which promises to be a memorable one.

It is not only the poles of the earth that invite the hardy explorer to-day, but there are altogether some twenty millions of square miles of territory of which absolutely nothing is known.

In America there are two million square miles of unknown land, in Australia a like amount, and in Africa three times as much lies waiting for a Stanley or a Glave. In the vicinity of the poles there is an area equal to all the other unexplored territory put together—say some ten or twelve millions of square miles—and whether this area is land or water and whether it is a barren, snow-covered waste, or whether a paradise of tropical verdure, with fruits, flowers and birds, nobody knows.

Think of it! An area equal to one-fifth of the entire known land is a blank upon the charts to-day. So that for years to come there will be plenty of work for the daring explorer of the unknown.

And what is being done to open up this vast unknown territory?

Nansen returned this year from an expedition that eclipsed all previous efforts to study the north polar regions, and Frederick A. Jackson, who, with the financial assistance of A. C. Harmsworth, the enterprising London publisher, was enabled to place a thoroughly well equipped expedition on Franz Josef Land two years ago,

is carrying on the work of polar exploration systematically and intelligently from that place.

The Hudson Bay Company's people, in their pursuit of the rapidly disappearing fur-bearing animals of British America, are gradually spreading our knowledge of that part of the continent.

By far the most fascinating work to be done is the proposed exploration of the lands surrounding the south pole. Until a short time ago this "Terra Australis Incognita" was supposed to be entirely de-

Ross, whose visit was made in 1840, after wintering at Tasmania, penetrated the cordon of icebergs that surround the land on every side, and found within that dangerous circle the peaceful waters of the antarctic continent, filled with loose ice that offered but little obstacle to his advance. Through this he sailed on southward and discovered land, upon which was a range of mountains, 10,000 feet high, and at the lower extremity two great active volcanoes, which he named Erebus and Terror, after his expeditionary vessels.

It is believed that this wall of ice is formed by the freezing of the water and spray that is dashed first against the coast by the action of the sea and then against the wall itself. Captain Ross estimated the ice barrier to be about 200 feet high and a thousand feet thick.

Captain Wilkes, of the United States navy, who commanded an exploring expedition to various parts of the world from 1838 to 1842, found this same wall of ice existing to the west of Victoria Land (so named by Ross). The portion discovered

Larsen landed upon the coast and then proceeded to see as much of the territory inland as his duty to his officers, who had sent him out, not to explore, but to catch whales, would allow. What he found has started the entire scientific world, for it upset all previous theories and established beyond doubt that the island had once been inhabited.

At an elevation of 300 feet above the sea he found about fifty balls made of clay and sand that seemed to have been fashioned by human hands. To be sure such objects

his arrival home, and it was not until the owners of the vessel read of them in the log of his voyage and sent extracts to the scientific bodies in his native land that the world became acquainted with their great value.

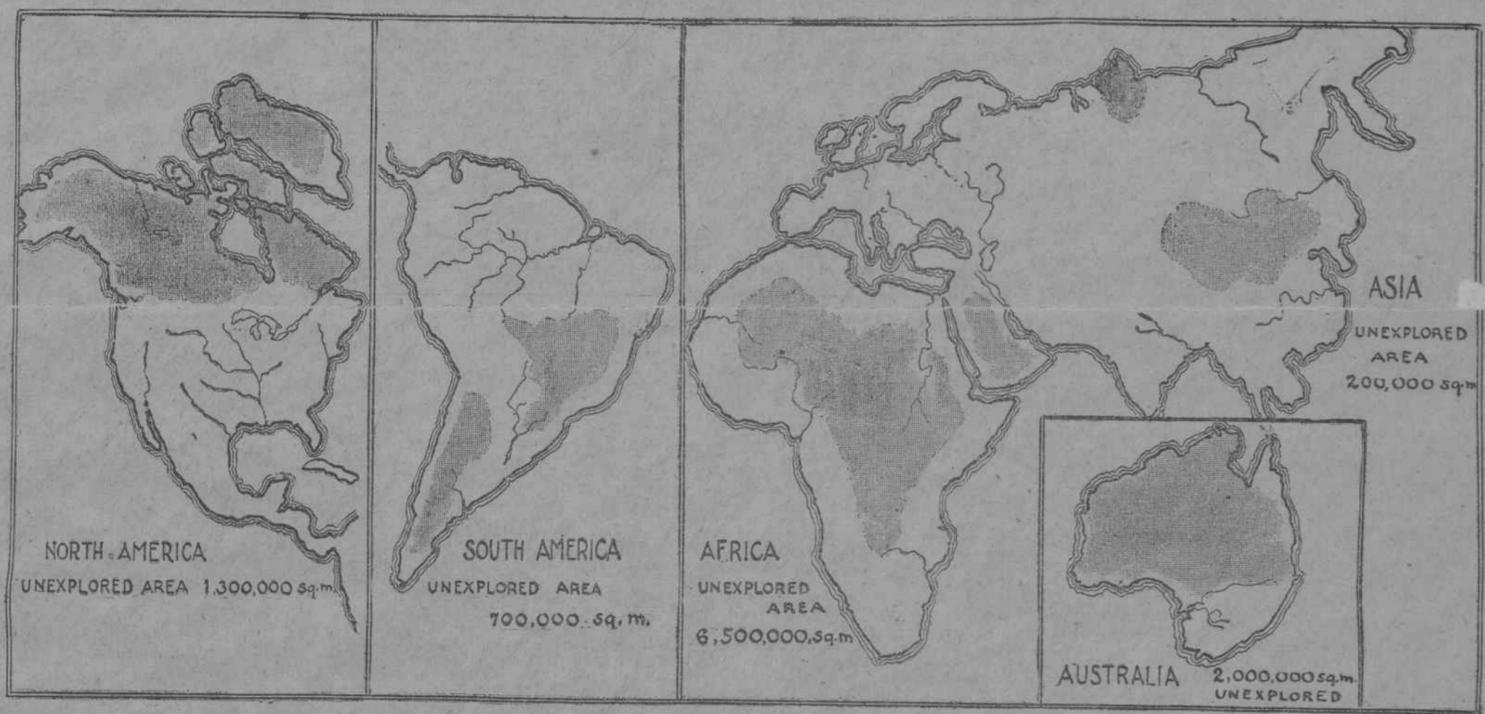
Later on Carsten Egeberg Borchgrevink, a Norwegian connected with one of the educational institutions in Australia, obtained permission to join the crew of the Antarctic, a whaling bark that was about to visit the south polar seas. During the voyage the vessel approached the main-

grew upon some of the rocks. He also noticed the almost inexhaustible beds of penguin guano, specimens of which he carried away with him, and, by exhibiting these to some commercial minded yachtsmen in London, he has succeeded in so interesting them that they have determined to fit out a vessel to combine scientific search with the shipment of antarctic tilters, and so defray the expenses of with the profits of the other.

But what do the explorers of Antares expect to find? Certainly not a land flowing with milk and honey. But why should they not? There is more than one belief in the theory of Captain Syme regard the polar regions—that there is a deep depression at either pole, and that this is not a barren waste, covered with ice and snow, but a land of sunshine and flowers, and where the people enjoy the delicious climate and the natural glories of the Garden of Eden before the fall. The delightful Utopia was irreversibly referred to as "Syme's Hole," and there were people who were neighbors of Captain Syme when he lived in Louisville, Ky., who carried his theory even further and believed the earth to be hollow and that the entrances were through holes at the poles, so large and descending so gradually that the descent could not be noticed. It was believed that as many people lived inside the earth as on its surface.

An approximate division of the estimate made of the unexplored parts of the globe is following:

MAP SHOWING THE UNKNOWN AND UNEXPLORED PARTS OF THE EARTH TO-DAY.



void of all animal or vegetable life, and a feeling of awe came over every one whenever the name of that land of terrible desolation was mentioned. But the fact is that all this was mere surmise, for there had been no absolute investigation made.

Among the earlier visitors (they were scarcely more) of that part of the world only three ever set foot upon the land. They were Briscoe, Ross and D'Urville, and neither of these was upon the main land, but upon outlying islands. Nor did they attempt to leave the beach for even a short trip inland.

It is but justice to say that he did endeavor to find a place where a landing could be effected, but the land was faced with a perpendicular wall of ice from 150 to 200 feet in height, without a single opening through which the explorers could set foot on land. For 450 miles they sailed along this wall of ice, without finding a break, but from the masthead it could be seen that behind the wall was a rocky, volcanic country, with no indications of animal or vegetable life, save innumerable penguins, that make these rocks their home.

by the American sailor has been named Wilkes Land, in view of his services in that region.

Since Ross turned back, unable to do more than land upon an outlying island for a few minutes in 1841, no one has ever set foot upon the land in this antarctic archipelago until three years ago, when a modest sailor man, Captain Larsen, in the Norwegian whaler Jason, approached Seymour Island, which is marked as Cape Seymour on the maps, and lies near the northern point of Graham Land. Imbued with a laudable spirit of investigation, Captain

could be formed by the action of water and masses of ice, but, as if to set at rest all doubt of their human origin, they were found resting upon pillars of the same material.

As evidences of the previous existence of vegetable life and of a more genial climate, he found some large petrified trees with their roots, bark and limbs intact and in an excellent state of preservation and in such a position as to render it certain that they had not been thrown up from the sea.

Captain Larsen was too modest to call attention to his wonderful discoveries upon

land, near Cape Adair, on Victoria Land, and, carrying out a firm resolution he had previously made to be the first white man to set foot upon the antarctic continent, Borchgrevink jumped into the water as the prow of the small boat touched the beach, and had the honor of being the first of the crew to land by at least three seconds.

While his companions remained upon the beach, Borchgrevink followed the penguin pathway up the cliffs, and saw, as Captain Larsen had seen on Seymour Island, evidences of vegetable life in petrified trees and a small low order of lichen, which

In the western hemisphere all of Alaska is still unexplored with the exception of some of the principal rivers and along the coast.

The interior of Greenland has been crossed by Nansen and Peary, and they have furnished all the information we have concerning it. The whole of British North America, including Labrador, is practically unexplored, except the southern belt, which is the inhabited portion, and along some of the northern rivers, where there are posts of the Hudson's Bay Company.

In South America the southern portion Argentina is unknown, as is also the plateau of Bolivia, which is called "Indo," or uninhabited, and that is to its dryness and the severity of its climate. The same conditions exist in high plateau of Brazil and in the northern portion, which has the largest forest of the world. It can only be traversed by means of the rivers.

In the eastern hemisphere, nearly all the northern and eastern portions of Siberia are still unexplored. Though a few travelers have crossed Africa the great interior is almost entirely unknown. The interior of Australia, which is nearly as large as the United States without Alaska, is virtually unexplored. It has been crossed from north to south, but no one has traversed the continent from east to west.

THE SOUTH POLE HIDDEN BEHIND ITS WALL OF ICE.

TO BE ASSAULTED ANEW BY IFTREPID EXPLORERS.



THE VOLCANOES DISCOVERED BY ROSS IN 1840

PERPENDICULAR WALL OF ICE 450 MILES LONG.