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William S. Bruce LL.D., F.R.S.E.

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Zambesi was insistent and enduring. Even where the scenery was dull there was still the charm of wild animal life—the green-eyed crocodiles, the primæval hippos, the plain with its antelopes and zebras and its beautiful crowned cranes. The sandbanks were covered by regiments of birds, ibises, cranes, open-billed storks, spur-winged plover, sand grouse, scissor-bills, and many more. When we passed a forest patch at dawn, monkeys sat shivering in the first sunbeams, splendid fish-eagles stood sentinel upon the tallest trees, and otters chased one another about the island rocks. And when the hot day was gone, what could be more enchanting than to drop in silence down the river when bitterns were booming in the reeds, mysterious wings moved by in the shadows, and fireflies went and came like fairy lamps!

A NEW SCOTTISH EXPEDITION TO THE SOUTH POLAR REGIONS.

By WILLIAM S. BRUCE, LL.D., F.R.S.E.

WITH the publication of the first of the serial scientific volumes of the voyage of the *Scotia*, and with other volumes rapidly nearing completion, one comes in view of the end of the work of the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition. It may, therefore, not be out of place to make a general statement of certain plans that I have been maturing with a view of following up the work of the *Scotia* by means of another Scottish Expedition to the Antarctic Regions, which I am prepared to organise as soon as the necessary funds are provided.

The plan of the new expedition is similar to that of the recent Scottish Expedition, and is as follows.

There would be one ship of about 250 to 300 tons register, carrying about thirty-six men, including six men of science. The vessel would be provided with all the most modern oceanographical equipment and prepared to work in depths exceeding 3000 fathoms. The definite area selected is the region south of 40° S. in the South Atlantic Ocean, avoiding the tracks of the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition in 1902-04, but complementing and supplementing the *Scotia* explorations in those seas. A suitable base to commence operations is Buenos Aires. A start from there would be made in the early spring, say not later than August 1st, and a zigzag course under sail steered between latitudes 40° S. and 55° S.—a visit to Gough Island and the other islands of the Tristan d'Acunha Group is included—a double or treble line of soundings with a regular series of physical observations at each station would be made, and the trawl lowered two or three times every week. No haste is required on this voyage, the vessel will be going before westerly winds under sail the whole time, coal being husbanded for handling the vessel during sounding, trawling, etc. Cape Town would be the first port of call, and thus a belt of 1000

miles in width and over 3500 miles in length will be explored where no oceanographical work has been done at all, with the exception of some soundings and trawlings made by the *Scotia* in 1904. Whilst crossing the "Scotia Rise" which the Scottish Expedition discovered as an extension of the Mid-Atlantic Rise 1000 miles further to the south, it will be interesting and important to obtain by grippers samples of the rocks *in situ* of which this rise is built up.

At Cape Town it is intended to send all the scientific material and the first copy of the scientific logs home, in case of accident to the ship in her second voyage. The ship and all her gear being thoroughly overhauled, she would be filled up with coal and provisions. The South Sandwich Group is the next objective, and here an arrangement will be made for a vessel with coal and fresh food to meet her. The special interest in this region is to carry on bathymetrical survey, because opinion is divided as to whether deep or relatively shallow water exists where the isobaths are cautiously marked in the Scottish chart, namely that region lying between the south end of the "Scotia Rise" and the South Sandwich Group. This is of vital importance in the study of continental connections.

A short time would be spent at the South Sandwich Group, especially with a view of obtaining a knowledge of the geology and natural history of the islands. Having filled up with coal, a cruise eastward to Bouvet Island would be made to determine more definitely whether or no there is a "rise connection" between the Sandwich Group and that island, as well as with the south end of the "Scotia Rise." From Bouvet Island a southerly course should be steered towards the southern boundary of the Biscoe Sea and a junction made between the *Valdivia* and *Scotia* bathymetrical surveys. To join up the coastline between Cape Ann and Coats Land would be an objective, as well as to explore the coast westward of Coats Land towards Graham's Land, and thus to clear up the disputed land reported by Morrel and suspected by Ross, strong indication for the existence of which is given in the meteorological and bathymetrical results of the *Scotia*.

In March it will be necessary to decide whether the expedition is to winter in the south, but under no circumstances, if it can possibly be avoided, shall the ship winter. She is there for oceanographical research, and must not be turned into a harbour hulk. Accidents will happen, and she may be beset and forced to winter as the *Scotia* was, for which she will be thoroughly prepared. But if there is a wintering, it will if possible be by a party of about half a dozen men in a house on shore.

This project for Antarctic exploration does not lend itself in the least to the attainment of a high latitude. It is almost certain in fact that the ship would not pass the 75th parallel of latitude, and it is more than probable that it would pass little beyond 70° S., but there is no doubt that, for systematic, serious scientific work, this would be one of the most profitable forms of Antarctic exploration that we could undertake.

In the Biscoe Sea, the coastline of Antarctica will probably be

found to lie somewhere between 70° and 75° S. and to run in a more or less east and west direction, and if a winter station is set up it would be along this coast. After finding suitable anchorage, a house will be set up with a complete establishment for meteorology, magnetism, biology and other scientific investigations, and the party will make inland excursions. Should there be sufficient funds, it would be well to have a second ship for the express purpose of carrying an extra supply of stores and a house rather than lumber up the oceanographical ship with all this material, but it will be necessary of course to suit arrangements according to the funds in hand. Should the lie of the land be found to be as we suspect, a serious attempt will be made to cross the Antarctic Continent and to emerge somewhere along the coast of the Ross Sea, the journey being made along the meridian of Greenwich on the Atlantic side and continuing along the 180th meridian on the Pacific side. Such a journey will actually be of more intrinsic value than a journey towards the South Pole and back. It will give us a complete sectional idea of the Continent of Antarctica, and the expedition would never be covering the same ground a second time. This is a big project, and one would have to face the chances of failure, but it ought to be attempted. Lieutenant Shackleton has wisely led the way by actually trying motor power, which I for one have been advocating for many years. The Scottish Expedition would also use this mode of traction for the accomplishment of such a journey.

This region offers an especially fine field for meteorological and magnetical research, because of the systematised series of meteorological stations which exist to the north-westward of the region right up to the South American Continent—thanks to the efforts of the *Scotia* and of the energetic Argentine Republic that has continued the work of that Expedition.

To carry out these plans, which extend over fully two years, in a satisfactory manner, I shall require a sum of about £40,000.

THE PULSE OF ASIA: A REVIEW.¹

THE first part of the title of this book, *The Pulse of Asia*, is somewhat in the style of the sensational novel, and is enigmatic, not at once to be understood by the uninitiated. The second part of it, however, indicates that the book is a serious scientific treatise; and it is amplified in the opening sentence of the author's preface. He there explains that the "book is the record of a journey in Central Asia, and its aim is to illustrate the geographic relation between physical environment and

¹ *The Pulse of Asia: A Journey in Central Asia illustrating the Geographic Basis of History.* By Ellsworth Huntington. Illustrated. London: Archibald Constable and Company, Ltd. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1907. Price 14s. net.