

Sir Ernest Shackleton's New Expedition.

SIR ERNEST SHACKLETON announces in the *Times* and *Daily Mail* a new Antarctic expedition to start under his leadership in August. The region to be explored is that missing part of the Antarctic coastline which lies between Drygalski's Wilhelm Land and Bruce's Coats Land. In this stretch the only land known with certainty is the bold headland of Cape Ann, or Enderby Land, discovered by J. Bischoe in 1831, but never visited. Cape Ann probably marks the edge of the continent. Kemp Land, a little further east and also on the Antarctic Circle, was reported in 1833, but its existence needs verification. Cook (1773), Bischoe (1831), Bellingshausen (1820), and Moore (1845) were each thwarted by pack in their attempts to push southwards to the west of Cape Ann. In lat. $68^{\circ} 5' S.$, long. $16^{\circ} 37' E.$, Bellingshausen was probably not far from land, but these early navigators took no deep soundings. A large bite in the coastline in this region is improbable, but glacier tongues may occur, and, by obstructing the free movements of the pack along the coast, make approach and landing difficult. Sir E. Shackleton hopes to avoid wintering in the south, and plans to sail northwards from Coats Land through the more open eastern part of the Weddell Sea to the South Sandwich group and South Georgia. After refitting he proposes to sail eastward *via* Bouvet and Heard Islands to New Zealand, taking deep-sea soundings on the way. It will prove no easy matter to sound in the stormiest seas in the world, but it is to be hoped he will be successful and so amplify the work of the *Valdivia* and *Scotia*, and further east that of the *Challenger* and *Gauss*. On the way home soundings are to be taken in high latitudes in the south-eastern Pacific.

In addition to his Antarctic work Sir E. Shackleton proposes to visit a number of isolated islands and to search for others the existence of which is doubtful. In the latter category is Dougherty or Keates Island, which was reported in lat. $59^{\circ} 40' S.$, long. $110^{\circ} 45' W.$, in 1841, and since has been sighted only once and several times searched for in vain. It probably has no existence. Search is also to be made for Tuanaki, a legendary island in lower latitudes in the South

Pacific. Of the other islands in the expedition's list, a few afford scope for exploration, but others are well known, even if seldom visited. St. Paul's rocks, near the Equator, have been explored by a number of scientific expeditions, from that of the *Beagle* (1832) to that of the *Scotia* (1902). Their geology, birds, and scanty plant-life are well known. South Trinidad achieved fame from Mr. E. F. Knight's cruise in the *Alert*, and was visited in 1902 by the *Discovery*; little new can be expected there. Gough Island, or, more correctly, Diego Alvarez, 280 miles south-east of Tristan da Cunha, promises more interest. The only scientific expedition that has ever visited that island was the *Scotia*, which in 1904 secured several new species of birds and plants. Heard Island was explored by the *Challenger*, but Bouvet Island, discovered in 1739, and sighted again and even photographed in 1898, is quite unknown. It appears to be ice-capped and is said to be inaccessible. Interesting work will be done in the South Sandwich group, which is imperfectly explored, even if known to sealers at one time. In South Georgia work remains to be done on the east and south coasts.

The expedition is to be equipped for oceanographical work, which will be conducted throughout the voyage. Meteorological research will be assisted by the use of a specially constructed seaplane and pilot balloons.

In the *Quest* the expedition has a first-rate ship for the work. She is a Norwegian wooden vessel of some 200 tons, built four years ago, and thoroughly tested in hunting and trading in the Barents Sea and Spitsbergen waters. The *Quest* has auxiliary engines, and will be rigged as a brigantine. Sir E. Shackleton will be accompanied by six members of his former expeditions, including Mr. F. Wild, Capt. F. Worsley and J. R. Stenhouse, Dr. A. H. Macklin, and Mr. L. Hussey, meteorologist. No other names of the staff are announced, but the *personnel*, which is to be small, is said to be complete. The expedition is financed by Mr. J. O. Rowett, and will be styled the Shackleton-Rowett Oceanographical and Antarctic Expedition. Mr. F. Becker has also given generous support.

R. N. R. B.

Milk Customs of Bunyoro, Central Africa.

ON June 21 the Rev. J. Roscoe read a paper on "The Milk Customs of Bunyoro" at a meeting of the Royal Anthropological Institute. Mr. Roscoe, after a brief account of the distribution of the main groups of peoples in Central Africa, described the chief social and religious ceremonies of the Bunyoro, of which the ritual of the milk formed a part. These ceremonies have become obsolete under the influence of Christianity, but they were revived and re-enacted so far as possible in order that Mr. Roscoe might have an opportunity of witnessing them.

The King of Bunyoro is expected to put an end to his own life as soon as he feels his powers failing through illness or old age. His death is announced by one of the milkmen of the sacred cows in the words, "The milk is spilled," pronounced from the roof of a hut and accompanied by the breaking of a pot of milk. This man and the boy whose duty it is to bring the cows to the royal enclosure to be milked are thereupon put to death in order that their spirits may serve the king in the next world.

The princes who lay claim to the throne now take to arms and fight until only one is left alive. This

survivor claims the body of the king, which lies in the royal enclosure unburied until he comes. Mourning then begins, and the dead king is buried in a pit filled up with barkcloths in a specially built hut. Two of his widows are buried alive with him. The country is then purified by the new king's sister, who sprinkles the people and cattle gathered in the royal enclosure with a mixture of water, white clay, and milk. A sham king is appointed for the purpose of removing sorrow and sickness. He is set on the throne, receives homage and gifts, and is then taken aside and strangled by the chief minister. The new king then moves to a new royal enclosure and begins his reign.

The king, as the chief priest for the people and cattle, has a constant succession of ceremonial duties to perform. His food is milk from nine sacred cows brought in from the royal herd and milked with much ceremony. While the king drinks everyone in the royal enclosure kneels down and hides his face; a cough or sneeze is punishable by death. Later in the day the king has a meal of four pieces of meat served by the royal cook, who has to place them in the