

by Dr. T. C. Poulter of the Armour Institute of Technology. This mobile base is to be 55 ft. long and will travel on wheels 10 ft. in diameter. Propelled by petrol, it will have a cruising speed of twelve miles per hour and a top speed, on favourable surfaces, of twenty-five miles. Its range of action should be about five thousand miles. There are quarters for four men, a control cabin, engine room, machine shop, galley and laboratory. Supplies for a year can be carried. The scientific equipment of the snow cruiser includes seismic sounding outfit, gravimeter, and dip circle as well as survey instruments. The builder claims that this mobile base will allow more work to be done in one season than other expeditions have been enabled to do in several years. Its weight is not given but must be considerable, so that its range of movement will clearly depend much on surface conditions, which are always a deciding factor in any form of antarctic travel.

Arrival of the Reincarnated Buddha at Lhasa

THE veil of secrecy which for so long hid the religious life and ceremonial of the sacred city of Lhasa from European eyes may be said to have been lifted finally by the account of an eye-witness, accompanied by photographs, of the arrival in that city of the new Dalai Lama, the four-year-old child in whom, according to Tibetan belief, has been re-incarnated the living Buddha. The story is told in an article which is contributed to *The Times* of November 4 by a special correspondent. Although the essential features of the installation of a living Buddha reincarnated in the person of a small child destined to become a Grand Lama were reported by the Abbé Huc, who travelled in Tibet in 1844-46, it was on hearsay only, as the Dalai Lama of that day had already attained the age of nine years. The present account is fully confirmatory of Huc, but with much added detail. On October 7 the new Dalai Lama was met by the Regent at Rigya, two miles east of Lhasa, where he had rested for two nights, and was escorted in procession to the Peacock tent, which had been erected in the centre of a triple-line, square enclosure. There he was seated on a throne, covered with white silk and fronted with the emblem of the double thunderbolt, to receive the homage and offerings of scarves from the officials, headed by the Regent, and representatives of British, Nepalese, Chinese, and of the Lhasa Moslems, who filed before him, receiving his blessing from either both hands, one hand, or a tassel pendant from a silver rod. At the close of this ceremony, which lasted for about an hour, tea was brought for the Dalai Lama in a golden teapot, of which he partook from a jade cup after it had been tasted by a household official.

On the following day the Dalai Lama entered Lhasa, the procession passing through the streets of the city to the sacred residence, the route, as on the preceding day, being lined with crowds of reverent spectators, monks and others, holding banners and auspicious emblems. One of the more interesting

incidents recorded took place when, as the yellow palanquin in which rode the Dalai Lama, forming the centre of the procession, reached the entrance of a temple, it was met by the Oracle of Nechung in a state of possession. A god who acts as the guardian of religion is said to enter into him, and when he is so possessed he dances with convulsive movements, berding his body quickly to the ground, forwards and backwards. He wore a high headdress of white plumes over a golden crown, and brandished a sword and a bow. Similar devil-dances are characteristic of Tibetan Buddhism, more especially in the eastern parts of the country, where primitive animistic forms of belief survive in conjunction with the more orthodox ritual. On this occasion the Oracle, described as a "terrible figure", rushed to the Dalai Lama's palanquin, and thrust in his head so that the spirit within him could do reverence. The young Dalai Lama, it is said, was quite unperturbed.

Pacific Entomological Survey

JUDGING from correspondence which has recently appeared in *Science*, some misunderstanding as to the purpose and position of the Pacific Entomological Survey has arisen. A brief statement relating to the Survey appeared in *NATURE* of January 29, 1938, p. 196. Mr. E. P. Mumford, director of the Survey, in connexion with the Hope Department of Entomology, University Museum, Oxford, has been for some years working out the collections with the co-operation of specialists in all parts of the world. More than two hundred papers have already been submitted for publication in Hawaii and elsewhere. It is important to recognize that the work at Oxford was made possible by grants from the Leverhulme Trustees and the British Museum (Natural History); the name "Pacific Entomological Survey" was used to maintain the continuity of the work, and will not be used in connexion with the present investigations associated officially with Oxford. The only object in view is to obtain, and make known, facts which will help in elucidating the problems of the Pacific Islands; the Marquesan collections and certain other material now under the charge of Mr. Mumford will be deposited in the Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu, when the final results have been obtained. To further this end the Hope Department of Entomology of the University of Oxford, by means of grants from the University for five years from October 1938, from the Royal Society and the British Association, and from private benefactors, is obtaining from sundry little-known islands in the Pacific, new collections which it is hoped will aid in elucidating problems revealed by the Marquesan work that Mr. Mumford has been completing at Oxford.

Ancient Tests for Pregnancy

IN a recent paper (*Proc. Roy. Soc. Med.*, 32, 1527; 1939) on this subject, Dr. H. P. Bayon showed that the existing translations of Egyptian papyri revealed directions for the performance of several tests for pregnancy; some of the tests seemed superstitious,