

Written for this Paper.  
**THE NEXT POLAR EXPEDITION.**

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**HAVE JUST** had a talk with the great antarctic explorer. His name is Carsten Egerberg Borchgrevink, and he is the first man who has ever landed on the great

continent which is now believed to lie about the south pole. The hemisphere of North and South America contains a little over 16,000,000 square miles. Mr. Borchgrevink claims that the continent of which he is to some extent the discoverer contains 8,000,000 square miles, and says he is convinced it is quite as large as all Europe. His journey to this unknown land was through vast bodies of floating ice, and at times he drifted between snow-clad peaks, some of which kissed the sky at an altitude of more than two miles above his little vessel. His trip was over 5,000 miles in length, or longer than that made by Columbus, and the ship in which he made the voyage was a steam whaler of only 320 tons. He had to sail before the mast, in order to be able to make the trip, and he submitted to all kinds of hardships that he might carry out his desire for exploration.

I was introduced to Mr. Borchgrevink by the Hon. Gardiner Hubbard, the president of the National Geographic Society at Washington, and I spent a morning with him not long ago, during which he gave me some interesting information as to the expedition which he will make next year to explore this new continent. Before I give the chat, however, let me tell you something about the man. His name is Borchgrevink, which should be pronounced as though it were spelled Bork-re-vink. He is a Swede and was born in Christiana about thirty years ago. He stands, I judge, about five feet nine in his stockings, weigh 160 pounds and has a straight, well-rounded form. His features are almost German in their cast. His eyes are blue, his hair light brown and his mustache is of a sandy hue. He has a high forehead, a straight nose and lips rather thicker than ordinary. In repose, his face is rather stern, but as he talks his eyes light up with a smile. He appreciates a joke, and he gave a hearty laugh now and then during his descriptions of some of the humorous incidents connected with his voyage. Mr. Borchgrevink is a well-educated man. He went to college in Sweden and continued his education at one of the German universities. He speaks English fluently and our chat was in that language.

In talking about his first desire for polar exploration he said that he had for years aimed to go to the north pole and that all of his studies had been with that in view. He told me that he had worked together with Nansen and that the two had often taken excursions together in Norway to harden themselves for future work. Upon my asking as what he thought of the reports of Nansen's hav-

ing reached the pole, Mr. Borchgrevink replied:

"I doubt it. The news from Nansen comes to us at the wrong time of the year. Had he reached the north pole we should have heard from him in September instead of in the middle of the winter. Had he been successful I do not see why he should have come back over the same road that he went in going to the pole. His idea, you know, was to get into a certain stream, which he thought flowed around the pole and to have floated or drifted right around it. Why he should have gone to the pole and then come back fighting against the current I cannot see. I think there must be some mistake about the reports."

"What kind of a man is Nansen?" I asked.

"He is a man of great force," was the reply. "He is very enthusiastic, is full of energy, and at the same time is cool and calculating. He is not a crazy enthusiast, as many people suppose. He laid out his plans on what he believed to be scientific grounds, and it may be that he will succeed."

"How about the balloonist's voyage to the pole? Do you think there is any chance of his success?"

"Who can tell?" replied Mr. Borchgrevink. "I met Mr. Andree during the geographical congress at London last July and had a chat with him about his proposed trip. He argues very plausibly as to his schemes. You know King Oscar of Sweden is much interested in it. King Oscar is a man of extraordinary ability. He is well up in science, and is quite an able writer. I mean by this that he can write things himself. He is not like many other monarchs who have posed before the world as having literary ability, who have had others do the writing for which they have gotten the credit. King Oscar is much interested in science. He has paid much attention to arctic exploration, and he has given quite a lot of money to further Mr. Andree's expedition."

"In connection with this," Mr. Borchgrevink went on, "I heard a curious story about King Oscar the other day which somewhat illustrates my idea of Andree and his trip. A well-known geographer of Philadelphia paid a visit to Sweden a month or so ago, and during his stay there he met his majesty, the king. His majesty talked with him at length about geographical subjects, and among other things asked the Philadelphian what he thought of Andree's expedition. Hereupon the Philadelphian laughed, and replied that Andree must be crazy, and that his whole scheme savored of lunacy. The king answered the Philadelphian that he might possibly be right, but that if the balloon expedition savored of lunacy, it was a sublime lunacy. I don't think that the Philadelphian knew that the king had contributed to the expedition."

"How long will Andree's balloon voyage probably be, Mr. Borchgrevink?"

"It is Andree's idea," was the reply, that he will be able to fly over the north pole in about a week. He will carry his balloon on a ship to the furthest possible point north, and then, by rising, the currents of wind will carry him over the pole. He expects to accomplish in the course of a few days that to which others have in vain devoted money and years.

"The serious dangers in Andree's ex-

pedition," Mr. Borchgrevink went on, "are the winds. When I met him he asked me all kinds of questions as to the winds of the south polar regions and their continuance. He told me that his great fear was that he would get in a calm some place near the pole. In this case his balloon might settle and he would be almost entirely lost. He told me that he hoped in such a case to be able to rise into a higher strata of air, where he would find a fresh current and thus go onward. It seems to me that this question of the wind currents is the most important one in his case. The winds are, I judge, less strong as you approach the poles."

"Another thing to be considered will be heat. You know very well that the air gets colder as you rise above the surface of the earth. As you get into the colder regions the difference in temperature is great, and it is a question how Andree is going to keep warm. He dare not have a fire in his balloon, for a spark might ignite the gas and blow everything to pieces. He will have to keep warm by clothing. He knows a great deal about aerial navigation, however, and has a very good idea of what he can do with a balloon."

The conversation here turned to Mr. Borchgrevink's trip to Antarctica, and he gave me a very interesting story of his voyage, the most of which has never been published. The expedition was organized as a whaling enterprise, and, in order to go, Borchgrevink joined it as a seal shooter and sailor. He slept in the forecabin of the little steamer and did all the work of an ordinary seaman. Said he:

"The trip was taken with the idea of catching whales and seals, though I went along for purely scientific purposes. You know there are different kinds of whales. That which is the most valuable is called the right whale. It is a black whale, and is supposed to exist in large quantities in the waters about the south pole. We did not find any, however, though I still believe that they exist in those waters. We also expected to catch some seals. I went along as seal shooter, and with the understanding that I should aid in curing the skins. We found quite a number of fur seal and shot some. There are many fur seal about the south pole, though it is doubtful whether they exist in as large numbers there as they do in Bering sea."

"How long were you gone?" I asked. "The trip took us just five months," was the reply. "We started out from Australia in September and returned on the 12th of March."

"How far was the point on which you landed on the Antarctic continent from Australia?"

"It was just about 5,000 miles from New Zealand," replied Mr. Borchgrevink.

"What makes you think the place where you landed was not an island rather than a continent?"

"Many things," was the reply. "In the first place the waters, then the rocks, the mountains and their distance above the sea. These and numerous other things lead to the almost positive conclusion that there is a great continent down there about the south pole. It is true that it may be an archipelago of islands united by thick sheets of ice, but I believe that it is a continent. I have made careful estimates of the lands which I visited and of those discovered