

BARON ADRIEN DE GERLACHE DE GOMERY.

Baron Adrien DE GERLACHE DE GOMERY died in his sixty-ninth year on the 4th of December 1934.

This admirable ex-officer of the Belgian Navy, as modest as he was unselfish, had devoted his life to the study of the sea. He was the first to face the unknown rigours of a winter season in the Antarctic polar regions, with the most precarious resources, in his ship the *Belgica*, in 1897-1899. He discovered the strait which now bears his name, separating three large islands from the northern extension of Graham Land. Desirous of pushing on to the Pole, he fell in with the pack where his ship remained caught in the ice. During the year that followed, the *Belgica* drifted with the pack, sighting no land but making valuable soundings as well as important meteorological observations. All the expeditions which have since participated in the assault on the South Pole have benefited by the memorable results produced by this expedition, which remain a scientific monument of the highest order.

In 1901, DE GERLACHE proceeded to the Persian Gulf on board the Belgian yacht *Selika* and brought back abundant zoological collections. In 1905 he was again in command of the *Belgica*, purchased and fitted out by the Duke of ORLEANS for his Arctic expeditions. He was the first to cross the pack-ice from Spitsbergen to the east coast of Greenland, which he reached 100 miles further north than had hitherto been done; he then made his way along the east coast of Greenland, still in the ice, securing a continuous haul of scientific collections of great value.

In 1907 and again in 1909 the *Belgica* operated with the same success in the Barents and Kara Seas, and once more in the Greenland pack.

It was DE GERLACHE who, as early as 1905, advocated the building of a ship specially protected against the ice, for cruising in Spitsbergen waters. The ship was finally built and became the *Endurance*, which Sir Ernest SHACKLETON used in 1914 for his expedition to the Weddell Sea.

The editing of the scientific results of the *Belgica* Expedition, the publication of which was suspended during the War, occupied DE GERLACHE for the rest of his life. King ALBERT made him a Baron in recognition of his achievements, which were thought highly of both in Belgium and abroad.