

From the Deep Sea

THE interest which we all take in books like *The Kon-Tiki Expedition*, radio programmes like *Focus on Inter-Planetary Travel*, and films of a similar kind is a pretty good indication that we are still as fascinated as ever by the unknown. Some people tend to think that there's not much exploration and discovery left on Earth, but has it ever occurred to you that one-third of the world's surface is covered by water more than 12,000 feet deep, and that there are some parts of it so deep that—as Dr. Anton F. Bruun, of the Danish deep-sea expedition, puts it in a broadcast to be heard soon—Mount Everest could be placed on the bottom and still leave about a mile of water above?

Of course, there's much animal life in this water, but very little was known about it at depths, below 15,000 feet when the Danish research ship *Galathea* set out from Copenhagen in October, 1950. The *Galathea*, which has been in New Zealand waters recently, has already sailed round the south of

Africa, across the Indian Ocean, and has dropped its line into the 34,000-foot deep Philippine trench. Last week it left on a brief voyage to the Kermadec trench, where it was to send down for the first time, in a globe made from a special non-magnetic alloy, instruments designed to find out whether there is an increase or a decrease in the magnetism of the earth a few miles nearer its centre. Meanwhile, the collection of deep-sea animals, big and small, grows, and the study of their conditions of life and of the production of microscopic plant life in the sea continues.

On board the *Galathea* is Hakon Mielche, known to English-speaking readers as a writer of travel-books. In charge of information services, he is specially concerned with making known the work of the expedition. This is being done to an unusual extent. But, as Hakon Mielche puts it, the man in the street in Denmark "has paid for his passage" on the *Galathea*. Funds for the expedition were collected in small contributions from the people as a whole.

So back to Denmark the story of the expedition is going as the voyage proceeds. Many films have already been made, about the work and the countries visited, for showing in schools and clubs. Programmes have been recorded for broadcasting. Illustrated articles are being sent back all the time. Hakon Mielche himself is writing three books about the voyage. And wherever they have the opportunity the expedition's men are talking and showing films about their country. Apart from the Danish scientists and the foreign scientists they have as guests most of the time, the *Galathea* has on board a group of young Danes who are spending their period of national service with this naval vessel.

All this seemed to suggest that there was excellent broadcasting material on the ship, and when she was tied up at Auckland the other week a small team from the NZBS with recording gear spent the day aboard. They were Arthur E. Jones, script writer, of 12B, James Boswell, Talks Officer at 1YA, Patrick Smyth, of the Auckland Recording Studios, and a technician. They brought back enough material for several hours' playing. The leader of the expedition, Dr. Bruun, talked about the work they were doing and some of the creatures that have already been collected, and other members of the party described their special work—just how the deep-sea trawl is put down, for instance, and how the collection is preserved. Answers were given to such questions as whether deep-sea fish explode when they are brought to the surface, and whether (and where) deep-sea monsters not seen before might be found. The captain and some of the young conscripts also were brought to the microphone; and there is an interview with a sea-elephant. Hakon Mielche contributed to the recording—and then turned his microphone on Patrick Smyth and interviewed him.

From all this fascinating material two documentary programmes—one for National and one for Commercial stations—and a number of shorter talks are being prepared. Dates and times of broadcasting had not been decided when we went to press, but it should all be on the air very soon.

ON THE GALATHEA: Left, Hakon Mielche, travel writer. Below: Patrick Smyth (left) interviews Dr. Anton F. Bruun, expedition leader

