

Register, March 11/13

POLAR MORTALITY.

How Lieut. Ninnes and Dr. Mertz Died.

Providential Escape of Dr. Mawson.

SYDNEY, March 6.

A wireless message received by Professor David from Dr. Mawson from Adelle Land, via Macquarie Islands, states:—"The Aurora arrived on January 13. All the sledge parties returned to the hut by January 17, except my party. Lieut. Ninnes, Dr. Mertz, and myself on December 4 were exploring the new coastline 300 miles south-east of the winter quarters. Lieut. Ninnes, with one dog team and almost all the food, disappeared in an unfathomable crevasse. Dr. Mertz and I, with inadequate provisions and six starving dogs, struck out over the plateau for the hut. We encountered unexpectedly bad weather, which retarded our progress. We subsisted chiefly on the dogs. On January 17 Dr. Mertz died, from causes arising from malnutrition. On February 7 I alone arrived at the hut, having travelled through the snow and fogs, miraculously guided by Providence through heavily crevassed areas. Capt. Davis had waited until it was no longer safe, and is now proceeding to our western base. He left a few hours before my arrival at the hut. Six men are here with me at the hut, left to prosecute research—C. T. Madigan, Lieut. R. Page, Dr. A. L. McLean, F. Bickerton, and Jeffries. The Aurora intended to return from the west, and is expected in a few days, when an attempt will be made to get off, but, on account of the heavy winds, we are unlikely to do so. Regular wireless communication may be expected in future. —Douglas Mawson."

TREACHEROUS CREVASSES.

INTERESTING NOTES BY PROFESSOR DAVID.

SYDNEY, March 6.

Although the latest message from Adelle Land states that six members of the expedition are at the winter quarters with Dr. Mawson, only five names are given in the wireless communication received on Tuesday. However, the name of Mr. Hodgman was included in the number. "It is clear from this message," said Professor David this evening, "that the scene of the sad disaster was at a point 300 miles south-east of Dr. Mawson's headquarters, and therefore about 180 miles north-east of the south magnetic pole. It seems little short of miraculous that, in spite of so many expeditions having in late years gone to Antarctica and wintered there, and travelled in the aggregate so many thousands of miles over more or less heavily crevassed ice, there has never been, so far as I am aware, until this case in Dr. Mawson's expedition, a single fatal accident through the precipitation of any members of these expeditions down a crevasse. These crevasses are of the nature of enormous cracks, more or less vertical, traversing glacier ice, and moving in some places more rapidly than in others. It becomes so stretched that it gives way eventually under the tension with a roar like that of distant artillery or heavy thunder. On account of the heavy drifting of snow under the influence of blizzard winds these crevasses become rapidly roofed over with what is technically known as a snow lid. The tendency is for the lid to be very thin and treacherous on the side of the crevasse nearest to the prevalent winds. On the further side the snow lid is usually much thicker, and therefore safer. One of the great perils is that even a carpet of snow left by blizzard winds effaces all traces of these hidden dangers, and prevents parties from ascertaining the direction in which the crevasses trend. If one always knew their trend the danger of crossing them would be much lessened, as one would naturally so direct one's sledges that they would cross the crevasses at right angles. Sledges with the load upon them may weigh from 600 to about 800 lb.—fully a quarter of a ton. If a sledge is being man-hauled, with the pullers strapped into their harness, and the lid collapses under the complete length of the sledge, simultaneously, nothing could prevent the whole party from being instantly engulfed."

SYMPATHY AND CONGRATULATIONS.

MELBOURNE, March 6.

The Governor of Victoria (Sir John Fuller) to-day sent the following telegram to Professor David:—"The State of Victoria is deeply grieved at the terrible message of suffering and death received from Mawson. If possible, convey to him my sincerest sympathy, and at the same time add my highest admiration for his own courage and endurance, and my congratulations, and those of this State, upon his almost miraculous escape."

Register, March 6/13

—Elder Scholars.—

On the notice board at the University on Friday appeared the following information:—"The Board of Examiners recommend that the Elder Scholarships be awarded to Florence Muriel Day and Jack Fischer; highly commended, Leslie Robert Martin." These two scholarships are for singing. The violin and piano scholarships (one each) have not yet been recommended. The reason that there are two singing scholarships (tenable for three years at the Elder Conservatorium) is that the scholarship obtained by Miss Gertrude Primrose James in 1911 has been resigned; while the other is the ordinary Elder Scholarship for the year. Miss Day has been a student at the Conservatorium since 1910. In



MR. J. FISCHER.

1911 she passed her first year for the degree of Associate of Music, and last year succeeded in her second-year course. Mr. Fischer is the possessor of a highly promising baritone voice. He is a nephew of Madame Minna Fischer, and the son of Mr. Otto Fischer, the pioneer Elder Scholarship holder. That gentleman upon his return from the old world sang tenor roles, but later his voice deepened, and he became a popular light baritone. The son is 22 years of age. He began his studies in 1909 under Miss Guli Hack, and continued with Mr. Winsloe Hall. Mr. Leslie Martin, who has achieved the distinction of "high commendation," began his vocal studies in 1911, and last year he became "Free Elder Scholar."

—Mr. Harold Parsons.—

Mr. Harold Parsons, Mus. Bac., the well-known cellist of the Conservatorium staff, has been granted a year's leave of absence to enable him to continue his musical studies in Europe. He will depart for London in a few weeks, and intends to proceed to Berlin. He expects to resume his duties at the Adelaide Conservatorium in May next year.

Register, March 6/13

Professor Michael Sadler, Vice-Chancellor of Leeds University, speaking at a conference on the subject of adult classes held at Leeds on Saturday, January 25, under the auspices of West Riding organizing masters and secretaries for technical education, he said he wondered whether education was not largely an affair of temperament. One temperament was determined, and resolutely centred on self-development and self-advancement; another temperament was content with the quiet, natural happiness which came through not pushing and through getting the best out of the circle, domestic and personal, which naturally formed around a man or woman who was reflective rather than restless. A great deal of our education was organized for people of the first temperament, and he was hesitating in his mind whether English education ought not to do more for these people who were not ambitious. They were the same people, and he had a suspicion that though they might do less than the others for their generation, heaven would be fuller of them. (Laughter.) Perhaps after all their duty as educational students was to serve the purpose of these more willful and selfish temperaments, and prod them up to social ambitions, stirred by various forms of venomous and dyspeptic discontent, and it lay with others who wore blacker clothes—children, poets, musicians, artists, and attractive people generally—to look after the education of the rest. (Laughter and applause.)

Register, March 4/13

UNIVERSITY BOTANY COURSES.

162

The University of Adelaide, which recently appointed Professor Osborn to the Chair of Botany, is about to begin courses of lectures and practical work in that subject. First year botany has not been taught at the University to any extent since the death of Professor Tate. There is now a fine laboratory capable of accommodating about 40 students, in addition to a research laboratory, in which there is room for three investigators. At present the herbarium is housed in the latter apartment. There is a large collection of material—including some from the Horn expedition—much of which has never been worked on, and there is great need for the accommodation and for more people to undertake its classification. The present is the first year in which botany has become a full subject for the ordinary and honours degree. A course of classes will begin on March 17. The introductory course is compulsory for students who desire to go on to higher work; and also for students in agriculture and forestry, who will also attend special classes in agricultural and forest botany. Professor Osborn has found a good many taking keen interest in botany who would not be able to devote their whole time to the courses, and for their benefit he has arranged a special evening course, beginning on March 20, the lectures in which are largely designed to be of service to those actually teaching the subject. They will be open, however, to persons who choose to take the course.

Register, March 10/13

MESSAGES FROM DR. MAWSON.

"ALL WELL AT THE HUT."

MELBOURNE, March 9.

A wireless communication received from Dr. Mawson by Professor Orme Masson, of the Melbourne University, yesterday stated:—"We still hope to get away. If remaining another year, fairly certain to keep in wireless touch with Australia. All well at the hut." This message, according to Professor Masson, indicates that the Aurora had not yet returned to the Adelle Land station from picking up the Wild party at the Termination Barrier. The Aurora, it will be remembered, had not proceeded far on her way to the Barrier when Dr. Mawson, whose two companions had perished, reached the station after having trudged alone for three weeks over the frozen waste amid great hardships. "It was unfortunate," said Professor Masson, "that he had thus been left, but the Wild party had to be looked after, and with the winter rapidly closing in it might have been impossible to get the Termination Barrier party on board before the ice closed in. The safety of Dr. Mawson was, however, practically assured, as prior to the Aurora's departure from Adelle Land six men were landed with ample stores to await his arrival."

Mr. Hunt (Government Meteorologist) has received a wireless message from Dr. Mawson at his winter quarters in Commonwealth Bay, Adelle Land, stating:—"The climate here is probably the most severe on the earth. The average wind velocity for the complete year to date is 50 miles per hour. Prevailing winds are direct from the pole. Deluges of snow are falling."