

WELCOME HOME.

University Greeting to Dr. Mawson.

A Great Gathering.

The first official welcome home to Dr. Mawson, after his great expedition to the antarctic regions, was given at the University. The citizens of Adelaide would have liked it to have been in the Town Hall, where they could have assembled in larger numbers, but it was urged, on the other hand, that the leader belongs to the University, and Mr. Madigan, the Rhodes Scholar, graduated there; and the Chancellor (Sir Samuel Way) deemed it only right to arrange a special congregation of the University in honour of the great occasion. That engagement was fixed for Monday afternoon, and what a reception it was! If there were a moistness of the eyes of the men who received it there were tears in the eyes of those who stood and cheered the man who had walked that long, dreary hundred miles in a wilderness of white. The Conservatorium was crowded. The first ceremony was the arrival of the Chancellor (Sir Samuel Way) and the members of the council and senate. They took their seats on the platform. By that time every chair in the hall was occupied, and the gathering was of a most distinguished character. The splash of the red gowns of the Chancellor and the red-and-green robe of Professor Masson, added colour to the sombre university robes, but on such a brilliant South Australian day—so different from the party's experiences in the antarctic—the ladies graced the proceedings in light costumes. The Chancellor was accompanied to the platform by the Premier (Hon. A. H. Peake) and Dr. Mawson. Almost at once the strains of the National Anthem announced the arrival of His Excellency the Governor-General (Lord Denman). He was accompanied by the Minister in attendance, the Minister of Customs (Mr. Groom), and Lord Richard Nevill, and was conducted to the platform by Mr. Justice Murray. The antarctic party entered in a body, and seated themselves at the side of the hall near the platform. On the platform were seated, in addition to the professorial staff of the University, the Council and Senate of the University, members of the Ministry and Parliament, the Judges, and graduates of the University. Next to the Chancellor sat the Governor-General (Lord Denman), and then Dr. Mawson. On the other side were the Premier, the Minister for Customs, and Professor Masson. The audience included representatives of arts, science, and literature, the Mayor of Adelaide (Mr. A. A. Simpson), and members of the City Council, suburban Mayors and Councillors, the heads of the religious denominations, a large gathering of the chief citizens, and citizenesses of Adelaide and the heads of departments. Ladies were present in large numbers, as were also the undergraduates of the University. The Vice-Chancellor (Dr. Barlow) was unable to be present owing to ill health.

—The Chancellor's Speech.—

Sir Samuel Way said:—Technically, this is a congregation of the University to welcome back our lecturer on petrology and mineralogy, after a long absence, occupied in original research of a great and permanent scientific value. (Applause.) Naturally, our welcome as a University

has been enlarged into an Australian first welcome home to Dr. Douglas Mawson, who, after two years' dangerous exploration in Antarctica and in antarctic seas, from which he narrowly escaped with his life, Dr. Mawson has written his name high on the scroll of imperishable renown. (Loud applause.) As a great Australian hero, his courage, fortitude, and endurance are unsurpassed in the whole history of exploration in any age or in any part of the world. (Applause.) This welcome has a national character. It has stamped upon it the distinction of the presence of representative men from all parts of Australia, and chiefly through the appearance of His Excellency the Governor-General. (Applause.) In respect of great deeds like that performed by Dr. Mawson, His Excellency can speak authoritatively for the whole Commonwealth.

During his short residence among us, Lord Denman has gradually and surely won his way into the hearts and high esteem of subjects of the King all over Australia. (Applause.) We all deeply regret that the state of His Excellency's health obliges him to return to England before the completion of his full term of office. We know that although His Lordship will change his sky, that distance will not obliterate his love for Australia.

Lord Denman—Hear, hear.

Sir Samuel Way—We hope His Excellency's return to England may have the effect of thoroughly recruiting his health. (Applause.) Lord Denman's is no new enthusiasm for this great enterprise. Before he left England, while the practicability of the exploring expedition into the antarctic was still under discussion, His Lordship was a keen supporter of the project. His influence helped to secure the first subsidy of £2,000 from the British Government as well as some of the munificent contributions from private donors, and Lord Denman was a generous subscriber himself.

After the arrival in Australia of Lord Denman the first public meeting he attended was in Melbourne, at a lecture by Dr. Mawson, and His Excellency's advocacy from the chair greatly helped to obtain grants by the Commonwealth and Victorian Parliaments, without which the expedition would have been impossible. The message inviting His Excellency's presence on this occasion reached him at Albury in the early hours of last Friday morning, when he was returning from a tour in New South Wales. Although suffering from a painful attack of hay fever, which happily disappeared in the bracing air of Mount Lofty—(applause)—His Excellency accepted the invitation at once, and named the only day he could attend. When Lord Denman gets back to Melbourne he will have made long railway journeys on five successive days to be present with us this afternoon. (Applause.) I am sure you will all agree with me that apart from his great office, no one can so properly as Lord Denman give the first welcome home to Dr. Mawson and his brave comrades, whom we are proud and glad to have with us this afternoon. (Applause.)

—Lord Denman's Eulogy.—

His Excellency the Governor-General, who was most cordially received, said:—"I thank you very much for the kindly welcome you have given to me here this afternoon. As Sir Samuel Way has just said, I happened to be in New South Wales when I received his courteous invitation to attend this gathering.

"On Saturday afternoon I attended at the Flemington Racecourse, in time to see the Newmarket Handicap, won by a South Australian horse. (Applause.) The animal, by-the-way, rejoiced in the name of Iownit. I wish I did. (Laughter.) I can assure you that there is no function I have attended during my term of office in Australia which has given me greater pleasure to be present at than this welcome to such distinguished a member of the Adelaide University, Dr. Douglas Mawson, and his gallant comrades of the first Australian antarctic expedition. (Applause.) From the way you receive Dr. Mawson's name I can see you in Adelaide are proud of him, and well you might be. (Applause.) And Australia is proud of him, and far away in the old country people have read of his exploits and achievements with just the same interest and pride that you are taking in Adelaide to-day. (Hear, hear.)

—Message from King George.—

"Might I in this connection be permitted to read to this gathering a cablegram I received two or three hours ago from His Majesty the King. (Applause.) It is addressed to the Governor-General, Adelaide, and states:—

"Please express my hearty congratulations to Mawson and the members of his expedition on their safe return after their arduous experiences and upon their successful achievements. At the same time I deeply regret the loss of their brave companions.—(Signed) George, R.I." (Prolonged applause.) I am very glad that that message arrived in time for me to read to this great gathering this afternoon. (Applause.)

—Achievements of the Expedition.—

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, I am well aware that you have come here particularly for the reason to listen to Dr. Mawson himself, and to the gallant commander of the Aurora, Capt. Davies. (Hear, hear.) But, having myself taken some interest in this expedition, I would ask you to be so kind as to allow me to offer one or two brief observations of my own before the other speakers are called upon. (Hear, hear.) In the first place, I hope no member of the expedition will think me discourteous when I saw some people ask what is the value of polar exploration at all? There are people, of course, who look upon this question purely in the terms of pounds, shillings, and pence; people who live in those terms, and say they will give nothing where they cannot be promised so much in interest upon the capital invested. People of that kind I would think very little of; indeed, I would have not very much time for them at all. (Hear, hear.)

—Instinct of Exploration.—

In connection with antarctic or arctic exploration there is an instinct that is innate in men, and particularly, I think, in the British race. It is an inevitable instinct with us, and it is certainly a higher instinct, because there is nothing mean or sordid about it. (Hear, hear.) Exploration of this kind is not undertaken in any hope of gain or for any petty personal ambition, but chiefly with the purpose of finding out something hitherto unknown, and offering it to the sum of human knowledge. And, further, exploration of this kind appeals, as it has always appealed, to the bravest, most intrepid, and ablest members of our race. (Hear, hear.) Sometimes it has been undertaken in vain with no tangible results.

—Immediate Results.—

That, certainly cannot be said of the Mawson expedition. (Applause.) You will allow me to touch very briefly on one or two of the immediate results of the expedition. First, there is the geological work done. Some 2,000 miles of coastline, I understand, has been explored, and will shortly be charted. A great inland plateau, which was practically unknown, was also explored. And in meteorology a record has been taken of the weather (and I gather from the accounts very disagreeable weather, too) in Antarctica, for somewhere about two years. That, I think, should be a matter of particular value to Australia, because this country, and particularly the southern portion of it, must be held to be the battle ground between the weather

from Antarctic and the weather from the tropical zones, and from what I have seen of it lately I think the weather from the tropical zones has had the best of it. (Laughter.) It must be of interest for the people of Australia to know how the weather, so to speak, is manufactured from the antarctic regions. Macquarie Island has now been taken over by the Commonwealth, and meteorological records and forecasts are being sent almost daily by wireless to the Commonwealth meteorological stations. Then there is the oceanographic work that has been performed by the expedition. A vast amount of information of the bed of the sea between Australia and Antarctica has been obtained. I understand that a kind of ridge underneath the sea between Tasmania and Antarctica has been located that was hitherto unknown, and as a result of the wonderful dredging operations carried out by Capt. Davies and the crew of the Aurora, a vast amount of entirely new animal and plant life has been found, and in geology many important discoveries have been made. These are only the barest details of some of the information, some of the achievements, obtained by the Mawson expedition. (Applause.)

—Bravery, Heroism, and Endurance.—

But there is after all something more than this, and something that can appeal to every man and woman among us. First there is the record of bravery, heroism, and endurance, unequalled in the annals of arctic or antarctic exploration. (Applause.)