

A FINE TRIBUTE TO A GREAT LEADER

DR. MAWSON'S "UNPARALLELED FEAT"

CAPTAIN DAVIS' EULOGISTIC REFERENCES

GOVERNOR-GENERAL DOES NOT WANT TASK OF ANNEXING NEW CONTINENT.

A perfect storm of applause greeted Captain Davis, the Governor-General leading the way, and calling for three cheers, which were heartily given. The captain said he was particularly glad to have the opportunity of thanking Lord Denman and the other speakers for the way in which they had referred to the work of the Aurora. If the work had been successful it was chiefly due to the help he had received from not only his officers and crew, but from the members of the expedition they had carried from time to time. (Applause.)

The Right Man for Leader.

Probably the chief reason that the expedition had proved successful was the fact that the leader had been the right man. (Applause.) A man must know what he was doing in the Antarctic, and must have the confidence of his men. No man was more fitted by training or experience to be a leader of such an expedition than was Dr. Mawson. (Applause.) They realised that when they at one time thought they had lost him. The feat accomplished by Dr. Mawson in returning from the journey from the main base was unparalleled in the history of Arctic exploration. (Applause.) The journey was one of the greatest illustrations of how tremendous odds were overcome by the subtle strength of man.

When It's Easier to Die.

It was easy to die under the circumstances in which Dr. Mawson found himself. Jumping into the bag, and "throwing in your hand" was simple. The difficult thing was to go on living. To go on living, as Dr. Mawson had done for 30 days, was the finest thing that had ever been done in Arctic exploration. (Loud applause.)

Confidence Between Leader and Captain.

Of course in such expeditions difficulties did arise. He had always the knowledge that any action of his would receive the support of Dr. Mawson. Such a state of affairs was absolutely necessary in Antarctic work. If a man were going to do his best he must feel that provided he did right he was going to be supported. Not only was he supported by Dr. Mawson, but when it became necessary to send a relief party away from the main base, the whole of the party at that base, 18 in number, volunteered for the expedition. It was the feeling that when the pinch came everyone would stand by and see the thing through that inspired and encouraged them to go on. He was glad that the party had been able to succeed Dr. Mawson. Whatever he had done was made possible by the support he had received. (Applause.) He heartily thanked them all and the officers and crew of the Aurora for the splendid assistance they had rendered him. He was sorry he could not call upon them to speak. (Applause.)

Annexing That Little Piece of Land.

The Governor-General is pleased that the duty of annexing that southern continent will not devolve upon him. He said so in proposing a vote of thanks to Sir Samuel Way. He had noted Dr. Mawson's remarks about the Arctic continent, and that he had annexed a considerable part of the continent for Australia. If that were so he did not think it would fall to his lot to formally take over the country on behalf of his Majesty the King for the Commonwealth Government, but to his successor. (Laughter and applause.) He confessed that he was rather pleased that that duty would not fall within the sphere of his province. (Laughter.)

LABOR PARTY'S APPRECIATION

MR. RYAN'S SENTIMENTS

Mr. Thomas Ryan, president of the Trades and Labor Council, wrote as follows to the Chancellor of the University (Sir Samuel Way, Bart, LL.D.):—

"Dear Sir—May I be permitted to express my indebtedness to you and to your council for the kind invitation to occupy a seat on the platform at your reception to my friend Dr. Mawson today? I have on many occasions had the plank 'University Work' on my political platforms, but this will be the first occasion when I will have had the honor of reversing the position by standing on a university platform. I can assure that among the many who are joining in your welcome to the doctor to-day none more sincerely appreciate the heroism of the doctor and his party than the men and women I represent, not only as president of the State Trades and Labor Council, but of the Grand Council of Australian Trades and Labor Councils. We are as proud of the work of our Australian scholars and students as any section in this land, and the fact that little Adelaide's University provided the leader and the South Australian Government, consisting largely of the members of our own institution, provided the first Government grant, gives us exceptional pleasure in joining with those who rejoice in the success which has attended the expedition. With very many thanks. —Yours truly, Thomas Ryan."

SCIENTISTS' WELCOME HOME

PROFESSOR ORME MASSON'S TRIBUTE.

On behalf of the Australasian Society for the Advancement of Science Professor Orme Masson, who is also vice-president of the expedition committee, welcomed the returned explorers. They had not been sure until that morning whether they could count on Dr. Mawson contributing to the large congress to be held in August in Sydney; but from a conversation he had had he was pleased he could definitely announce that the scientific results of the expedition would be made known at that congress. (Applause.) They were heartily glad to have the Australian heroes back with them. The Melbourne University did not grudge the Adelaide University, but envied it having a man like Dr. Mawson on the staff.

DR. MAWSON'S WELCOME HOME.

Dr. Mawson, our Antarctic hero, is not likely to complain of any lack of warmth on the part of South Australians on his return home. The Governor-General's excellent tribute to the splendid work performed by the expedition and to the value of the results to science should convince the public that it has received more than full value for the moneys so generously contributed by the various Australian Governments. A continent, it seems, as large as Australia has been discovered and annexed to the British Empire, and there is every reason to believe, as Dr. Mawson suggested, that before long Commonwealth authority will extend from the tropics of Papua to the eternal snows of Adele Land. Meteorological knowledge which, in conjunction with the establishment of the wireless station at Macquarie Island, will be invaluable to Australia has been acquired, interesting specimens of plant and animal life have been secured, and the marine floor of a large section of the Southern Ocean has been surveyed. As Dr. Mawson puts it, the story of the world, geologically or biologically, could not be told with anything like accuracy when so important a portion of the globe as the great Antarctic Continent remained sealed to science. It is not, of course, to be supposed that one expedition could do more in this direction than open what had hitherto been a closed door, hurriedly collect a few fauna and flora specimens, and give the world an indication of what lies hidden behind the Antarctic icefields. But that in itself is a valuable and important contribution to the sum of human knowledge.

Modest and self-effacing as he is, Dr. Mawson is, as Lord Denman says, the last man to tell the story of his own exploits. In such circumstances it was fortunate indeed that Captain Davis, the master of the Aurora, whose fine services contributed largely to the success of the expedition, should have been present at yesterday's welcome to describe, with an eloquence that was all the more moving because it was stamped with deep feeling and sincerity, what he thought of Dr. Mawson's lonely journey across the icefields after the tragic deaths of Lieutenant Ninnis and Dr. Mertz. The horror of that 30 days' tramp amid raging blizzards, with starvation staring him in the face and death joggling at his elbow at every turn, and the courage and tenacity of purpose that brought Mawson back to the main camp were properly described by Captain Davis as unparalleled in the history of polar exploration. Too much credit cannot be extended to the other members of the expedition for what Dr. Mawson described as the unanimity of earnest endeavor, without which success would not have been possible. The loss of Lieutenant Ninnis and Dr. Mertz certainly raises the question as to whether the results achieved by such journeys are not bought at too great a cost, but it must be remembered that science, and indeed every branch of human activity, numbers its victims in many fields. Heroism is, we know, not by any means confined to Antarctic explorations, but in feeling a thrill of pride in the exploits of Dr. Mawson and his companions we are but paying a tribute to a quality without which civilisation itself would have been impossible.