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Greatest Individual Feat in Arctic History.

Lord Denman, continuing, said that nearly a year ago, when Commander Evans, of Captain Scott's ill-fated expedition, was staying with him at the Federal Government House in Melbourne, the news from Dr. Mawson was just then received by wireless. Commander Evans then told him (Lord Denman) that Dr. Mawson must have had most marvellous escapes and a terribly hard time to get through to the base camp after he lost his companions. Commander Evans further told him that it is an axiom of Polar travel that, owing to the hardships and the severity of the climate, one man was unable to travel any distance by himself. Dr. Mawson was alone for over 30 days, and yet he completed that wonderful march under the most trying conditions it was possible to conceive. This was undoubtedly the most splendid individual feat of endurance in the history of all Arctic or Antarctic exploration. (Applause.) Australians might well be proud of their heroic fellow-countryman. (Applause.)

Disappointment of Seeing Aurora Sail.

Another incident showed the stuff that the party was made of. Captain Davis had to make his choice as to which party he would fetch away from the snows. Winter was coming on fast, and the ice was closing in. Terrible gales were beginning to spring up. The western party, situated 1300 miles away from Dr. Mawson's base camp, was very ill-provisioned, whereas the main camp was comparatively well equipped. Captain Davis decided to relieve the western party first, and Dr. Mawson coming in from his harrowing experience had the bitter disappointment of seeing the Aurora sail away.

A Gloomy and Soul-Deadening Winter.

Lord Denman said that he was a mild and peaceful individual, but had he been one of Mawson's party when he next met Captain Davis on shore he would have reproached him in terms more forcible than polite. (Laughter.) Doomed to pass the winter in a circumscribed and narrow snow hut, gales blowing so strongly that the men were only able to crawl on their hands and knees when they had to go outside of the hut, none of the amenities and concomitants of civilised life were available to them. There were no race meetings, no picture shows, no elections, no strikes, no speeches from Sir George Reid—(laughter and applause)—no Sydney "Bulletin"—(applause)—nothing that made life endurable, interesting, and possibly enjoyable. (Laughter.)

No Word of Reproach Was Uttered.

It was characteristic of Dr. Mawson and the men of his party that they never said one word of reproach to Captain Davis. Indeed, as afterwards transpired, Dr. Mawson sent wireless messages to

Captain Davis telling him to do what he thought best and act according to his own judgment. (Applause.)

Cecil Madigan Elects to Stay with Comrades.

Mr. Cecil Madigan being at the base camp, had the chance of coming away with the ship to take up his Rhodes Scholarship. He elected to stay with his comrades to wait for the missing leader. He preferred to stay and risk the chance of losing his scholarship. He hoped that the trustees of the Rhodes fund would give Mr. Madigan the opportunity of taking it up in due course, in spite of his long absence. (Loud and continued applause.)

A Hoary Old Sea Dog.

Lord Denman said that this was Captain Davis' fifth time in the Antarctic circle. Twice he went down to relieve members of expeditions, and it was owing to his fine sense of responsibility, his skill, and seamanship, that they were relieved. Last Christmas Eve the ship was caught in a blizzard, but he noticed that Captain Davis was present, and he would leave that master of mariners to tell his own story.

The success of the marine dredging and of the valuable and wonderful oceanographic records was due mainly to the painstaking work of Captain Davis. (Applause.)

Returns to Australia, Home, and Beauty!

Lord Denman said, in conclusion, that on the whole the health of the party was good. Dr. Mawson himself had suffered more than all those who came through, as was only to be expected he would after his awful experiences. The effects of the strain were not likely to be entirely effaced for many months to come. The

main fact over which they rejoiced was that Dr. Mawson had returned to Australia, home, and beauty! (Prolonged applause.) He was sure that they wished that every happiness this world could offer would come to him and to the lady who was shortly to become his bride. (Loud and continued applause.) With regard to Dr. Mawson and the gallant members of the expedition, in conclusion he would just say, whether they were Britishers or Australians, that they possessed qualities they all respected—courage, grit, determination. They were men to be admired because they had shown themselves possessed of these great qualities in so high a degree. They had fought against Nature and had wrested secrets from her when she was in her sternest and most cruel moods. They had faced bitter hardships and dire perils, and had overcome them. They were men to be admired because, in the quest for knowledge, they were ready to lay down lives, and, after all, man had nothing more than his life to give. For those reasons they had met together to welcome the men of Dr. Mawson's expedition and its intrepid leader, and to do them honor, as was their noble due. (Ringing applause.)

DR. MAWSON'S OWN STORY

GRAPHIC RECITAL OF THRILLING EXPERIENCES

WILL AUSTRALIA ANNEX THE NEWLY DISCOVERED LAND?

THE HAPPY LAND OF "GO-AS-YOU-PLEASE."

O'erwhelmed by the thunderous applause with which he was greeted on rising to respond, Dr. Mawson stood for some moments before speaking. "I don't wish to say very much, but I suppose that something is required," was his opening sentence. The large gathering certainly did require something; but Dr. Mawson did not forget that the story they were hungering for—the story of the expedition's two years' work, with its attendant perils and hardships is copyright even before it is written, and they had to leave more or less disappointed. As stated Dr. Mawson's forte is not talking; yet between the lines of the more or less disjointed story he told one could read if one so desired. He said just enough to whet the appetite for the story that is to come.

The Endless Welcomes.

He would much prefer that someone else told the story, he modestly observed, and his auditors sympathised with him. Perhaps Captain Davis would help him, he went on; he was sure the captain would. The members of the expedition too—who had done no less than himself—could each tell a story. Every man had stood by the expedition nobly, without thought of self. Since their return the receptions had been endless. He (the speaker) had tried to get them cut short. There had been such a rush that he would have to apologise for any shortcomings. He felt very grateful that the endeavors of his comrades and himself had been appreciated and he expressed his heartfelt thanks for the kind things said.

The Reason of the Success.

Any measure of praise for the success achieved must stand to the credit of those who sent the expedition forth. It was the man in the street, represented by the Australian Governments, who had provided the funds to equip the expedition. He did not wish to have undue credit attributed to himself. Every man had done his best. His comrades had met with fortitude and resource every circumstance in which they had been placed, and it was their unanimity of endeavor that had won the day. (Applause.)

The Men Who Stayed Behind.

Dr. Mawson is a modest hero. Any-one rather than himself must have the praise, according to him. In considering those who had borne the brunt of the fight, he continued, they must remember those who were prohibited the field, who had to remain at home, sharing the battles, keener in the absence of the hypnotic spell of action.

Thanks for Assistance.

The work accomplished could not be claimed to have been performed altogether by the members of the expedition. He was anxious to acknowledge the great assistance rendered by the special committees of the Australasian Society for the Advancement of Science, and, above all, that of Professors David, Mawson, and Henderson (of the Adelaide University). (Applause.) Messrs. David and Mawson had had most to do with the arrangements in Australia. Then Sir Samuel Way had rendered valuable service in South Australia, and had been chiefly instrumental in inducing the South Australian Government to make the grant which had paved the way for the whole undertaking. (Applause.)

A New Sphere of Action.

The expedition differed from most others of late years in that it did not focus upon the south geographic pole, but took a new sphere of action near to Australia, and which it was considered would be more likely to be useful to Australia, and which is was considered was practically unknown, so that scientific facts ascertained would be of great value. He did not wish to make out a plea for Polar expeditions, but would like to tell those people who queried the usefulness of such expeditions that new facts learned in scientific research added to their creature comforts. This applied to residents of cities as well as those in more sparsely populated centres.

Wresting Nature's Secrets.

Scientific knowledge gained in any part of the world always had a bearing on the elucidation of problems, which faced them in the homeland, and partly for that reason, it was incumbent to take the expedition to a region where nothing worth investigation might exist. Prior to his party going out it was not known whether anything did really exist south of Australia, but they had found out that a large country was situated to the south, which must play an important part, so far as Australia was concerned, in the future. They had discovered scientific facts which from an economic viewpoint would be of immediate use to Australia.

A Telling Comparison.

The doctor is a believer in the future of the newly discovered land. Several hundreds of years ago, he reminded his auditors, the Dutch discovered Australia, but struck it in a bad spot, travelling down the western coastline. They found it a barren country, and voting Australia a good went back to fertile Java. English seamen struck it in a different spot, and found it a good country, many years later, and Australia was now a great and rich country. Might not the same thing happen with regard to the new land down south?