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UNVEILING ANTARCTIC

Sir D. Mawson's Address To Science Congress

SUGGESTS IMPERIAL CONTROL

MELBOURNE, January 16.

Leading scientist and explorer, Sir Douglas Mawson proved himself a master of graphic word pictures when, in his presidential address to the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science at the Wilson Hall tonight, he lectured to a distinguished audience on "The Unveiling of the Antarctic." Asserting that this great area of more than 4,000,000 square miles was to be to humanity, Sir Douglas Mawson declared that if it were to be brought under some system of wise control and development it could not be left a no man's land, he suggested that unified control under a British Inter-Imperial administration would be the most certain to procure ultimate benefaction for the territory.

In the absence of the retiring president, the Governor of Tasmania (Sir Hubert Murray), the senior vice-president (Sir David Masson) installed Sir Douglas Mawson as president of the association.

"Sir Douglas Mawson has an outstanding figure to be recognised as the leader of Australian science," Sir David Masson said, "and there is no man living who has a better title to pronounce upon the unveiling of the Antarctic, the title of his presidential address.

"I propose to direct your attention to the solitudes that sentinel the Pole, for thus far extends the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth of Australia and the Dominion of New Zealand, Sir Douglas Mawson said. He went on to make a short historical survey of Antarctica and said that, from theoretical considerations, the ancient Greek philosophers had speculated the existence of an extensive land mass terminating the earth to the south of the world. Then, learned cartographers in middle ages had perpetuated the idea merely because they preferred a theoretical land to a blank space on their maps and not because of any concrete evidence. Later, portions of Australia were mapped as part of Antarctica. Captain Cook had been specially sent out on his voyage of 1772 to prove or disprove the existence of this great south land, and his was the credit of proving the non-existence of the mythical continent.

Future Of Antarctica

Discussing the future of Antarctica, Sir Douglas said that a careful estimate of the approximate area of the continent was 4,000,000 square miles. There was every reason to believe that, beneath the ice-cap, a diverse land topography lay buried. Along some localities near the land margin, where the ice sheet was able to make its way down to the sea, bold mountains raised their heads to heaven. The highest summit yet recorded was Mount Erebus, 15,000 feet. Near the pole, in the Ross Sea region, farther from the coast, the ice had submerged every vestige of rock beneath a vast flat dome at least 10,500 feet high. The probability was that, in some places, the thickness of the ice had been measured many thousands of feet. Colossal though this ice-cap was, it was but a shrunken remnant of its former self as developed in the culminating phase of the ice age.

The Antarctic was the world's greatest refrigerator, he added. The Antarctic was a prime factor in world climate. The Antarctic climate was a great and important controlling influence on the climate of the southern hemisphere; but, before knowledge was sufficient to draw useful deductions, observations on a vastly more extended scale were necessary.

Fossil evidence already to hand indicated that Antarctica in past times had been favored with a wide range of animal and plant life. The present glaciation had doubtless swept all life on the mainland into the sea. The lichens and mosses, which were very scarce, and a few types of microscopic animal life existing there today, in specially favored localities, were probably recent immigrants. Even the minor shallow water life had suffered strange modifications at the hands of nations because of the usurpation by the ice sheet of the whole of the zone of continental shelf during the recent period of ice invasion. The effect was not so noticeable with invertebrate life as it was with the fish, which exhibited curious restrictions on the range of genera represented.

Plankton Population

The glacial epoch, however, Sir Douglas Mawson said, had not had the same retrograde influence upon the plankton population. The growth of diatoms in those waters was so unusually so prolific that the color of the sea water was determined. Antarctic seas were also the support of unicellular concentration of small planktonic crustaceans, amphipods, and the like. In turn, these were the food supply of fish, and, directly and indirectly, of seals and penguins, and, pre-eminently, the whales.

The immense area of the Antarctic seas and their rich plankton concentration resulted in a stupendous whale community, he added. Antarctic blue whales had been caught as large as 110 feet in length and weighing 200 tons. No creatures, even of the prehistoric past, approached the bulk of these southern whales of today. Seals in great number, particularly four species, inhabited the pack-ice, and the shores of Antarctica.

Control And Development

"The future of Antarctica," Sir Douglas said, "depends very much upon whether it is merely reaped for what it offers at the moment and then left to cover dormant, or whether it is to be brought under some system of wise control and development. If the last ice to be left in Antarctica cannot be left a no man's land; it must be secured under authority, competent and able to impose restrictive regulations. This means government, and as there are at present no human inhabitants, the responsible Governments or Governments are required to exercise jurisdiction over Antarctica. Obviously, the fewer Governments, the better.

"It is obvious that unified control under a British Inter-Imperial administration would be the most certain to procure ultimate benefaction for the territory, and, I feel sure, that the other nations may feel disposed to press claims to a share in the onus of administration of the still unclaimed sectors of Antarctica."

Unclaimed Sectors

Various countries, including Great Britain and the Dominions, had claimed sectors of Antarctica. Sir Douglas Mawson said, and there remained two unclaimed sectors. One was south of the Atlantic Ocean, a region which extended for 1,000,000 square miles, in which the Norwegians were beginning to make inroads, was south of the Pacific Ocean, an area of 600,000 square miles, where Rear-Admiral Byrd had made important discoveries and had raised the flag of the United States on one portion.

"The beginnings of commercial development in Antarctica are centred on the fisheries, and whaling is in the ascendancy just now," he added. "The rise of this Antarctic whaling industry is a very modern event, for it is only in recent times that the technique has been evolved for the capture of the very large and powerful whales inhabiting the Antarctic seas. Since then the industry has grown to enormous proportions, and it has been found to be greatly advantageous to replace the shore factories by floating factories, and, in more recent years, 300,000 whales have been taken in Antarctic waters, producing products valued at twenty-five million sterling. This unique and rich industry could be perpetuated for all time were more adequate international control established. Australia and New Zealand have been well in the front rank in the exploration of Antarctica, but have not so far participated in the economic development of the Antarctic industries, although the 1,000 odd whaling miles of Hobart, as one of the important whaling grounds of the Antarctic, and, more particularly the richest whaling region of the world lies adjacent to Australia.

"There will be no difficulty in establishing land settlement in a few favored spots along the coast," Sir Douglas Mawson continued, "provided such commercial developments could offer sufficient inducements. Thus, should reasonably rich mineral deposits be discovered in accessible localities, there need be no delay in working them, but, so far, the only certain occurrence of useful mineral is that of coal. Gold, on account of its high value and low bulk for weight would be par excellence the element offering the best prospect for economic development under Antarctic conditions, but useful deposits of gold have yet to be found. We have already found in Antarctica occurrences of all the basic metals, but so far none in commercial quantities.

"I visualise that, before long, operations will be conducted from Australia and New Zealand into the southern regions much after the plan of the Hudson Bay Company. There will be isolated shore posts, where a few individuals will reside the year round, letting seal products and penguin eggs, as well as fish products of various kinds. One of their diversions and duties should be to broadcast weather reports each day. They might also take the opportunity to breed Arctic white foxes, for which the climate should be suitable and for which an abundance of meat should be available from seal and penguin carcases. Such fur farming, both from the sub-Antarctic islands and the Antarctic mainland, is sure to develop sooner or later, primarily because of the abundance of suitable food available at no cost whatever."

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Fees for Students at The University

All new students for the University of Adelaide must enter for lectures in the prescribed method not later than March 1. Fees, which may be paid in three equal instalments, are:—

Arts, £1 15/ a term for each subject; law, £2 9/ a term for each legal subject; dentistry, £16/13/4 a term, and medicine £13/6/8 a term. Fees for science, applied science, and commerce subjects vary.

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Honor For Professor Wilton

At a general meeting of the Australian National Research Council, held at the Melbourne University, the Thomas Ranken Lyle medal was awarded to Professor J. R. Wilton, professor of mathematics at the Adelaide University. As Professor Wilton was unable to be present, the medal was handed to Sir Douglas Mawson for presentation on some suitable occasion. The council elected as fellows members Professor A. P. Elkin, Dr. C. T. Madigan, and Mr. H. F. Holden.

Officers elected were:—President, Sir George Julius; deputy-president, Sir David Rivett; honorary secretary, Mr. A. J. Gibson; honorary treasurer, Professor O. U. Vonwiller; vice-presidents, Professor N. T. M. Willsmore, Professor H. C. Richards, Sir Douglas Mawson, and Dr. G. A. Waterhouse; executive committee, Mr. E. C. Andrews, Professor de Courcey Clarke, Professor W. J. Dakin, Dr. B. T. Dickson, Sir Herbert Gepp, Mr. J. B. Henderson, Professor T. G. B. Osborn, Professor A. E. V. Richardson, Professor E. W. Skeats, Mr. W. E. Wainwright, Dr. A. B. Walkom, and Professor R. D. Watt.

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"NO HELP FROM CONSERVATORIUM"

Adelaide Singer's Attack

Mr. Harold Gard, the Adelaide tenor, who, like his wife, Miss Vera Thrush, took the A.M.U.A. course at the Elder Conservatorium, said today that he supported every statement made in an article in "The News" by the former Adelaide City Organist (Mr. John Dempster) entitled "Fight in Adelaide for Music Pupils."

In his article, Mr. Dempster stated that because of the faulty constitution of the Elder Conservatorium musical life in Adelaide was at a standstill.

"Both my wife and myself," he said, "studied for seven years at the Conservatorium, and have never received the slightest help or assistance from that institution in anything that we have attempted to do for music in South Australia.

"Does the Conservatorium want people to remain with them for ever? If such conditions are allowed to continue, why not construct an old people's home at the back of the University for broken down Conservatorium students?"

When Mr. Dempster's article was referred to the director of the Elder Conservatorium (Dr. E. Harold Davies) he refused to comment on it.

News. 17-1-35

FUTURE FOR DOCTORS

"Must Organise Politically"

CHANGES URGED

MELBOURNE, Thursday.

DESCRIBING the present hospital system as a gigantic "Frankenstein monster," the president of the medical section of the Science Congress (Dr. J. V. Duhig), of Brisbane, today urged the reorganisation of the Australian medical profession on a political basis.

"As the synthesis of all the sciences and the medium of study of human biology, including psychology, behaviour, and the use and development of human intelligence," said Dr. Duhig, "medicine is the most important of all pursuits.

"It has not, however, articulated perfectly with the rest of the social skeleton, for the reason that it has been pursued either as a means of livelihood simply, or an instrument of government to secure just a bare margin of protection against destructive and devastating disease.

"It has never been an integral part of the social plan of any great statesman.

"**The medical profession in Australia must be reorganised on a political basis, under energetic leadership, to regain and enlarge its prestige, so that it shall be consulted and initiate enlightened social measures within its proper sphere," Dr. Duhig said.**

"Spurious Prestige"

"Medicine should no longer be a political plaything of inexperienced, though admittedly earnest and honest, men. It must educate itself along broader lines, come right up to date in science, and revert to its ancient and past century in prestige and social influence.

"The hospital system is a 'Frankenstein's monster,' because it is the side of medicine that appeals to the vote-catcher, and the medical profession is dragged into the whirlpool by the attraction of the spurious prestige of honorary appointments.

"The honorary medical system is an anachronism in the present state of nationalisation, but while this is so, the old fiduciary system that bred it is the best humanity has evolved.

"To maintain or revive that only a nation-wide system of insurance is feasible, and that must be made also to subsidise research, research, and the foundation of schools of medicine in selected areas."

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NO FEAR FROM SYNTHETIC WOOL

Scientist's Assurance

MELBOURNE, Thursday.—Wool producers have little cause for fear of synthetic wool of Germany, Mr. Hedley Marston, director of the nutrition laboratory of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research in Adelaide, told the physiology section of the science congress today.

"X-ray analyses of the wool fibre have indicated the structural cause of its elasticity, and it becomes obvious why wool is exceptional in the properties which render it so desirable for the manufacture of clothing," he said.

"The so-called 'woolstra' of Germany consists of about 60 per cent of pure wool, which was mixed with artificial silk. The material produced from the United States contained skin to 'shoddy'—a fabric woven from the wool recovered from discarded garments.

"**It is significant that the imports of woollops into Germany during 1934 fell by only 2 per cent, from the previous year, and there are queries now reaching Bradford for immediate delivery of wool to Germany," said Mr. Marston.**

"It is not unlikely that German buyers will again operate in Australia this year, the difficulties are mainly associated with the establishment of foreign credits."

(Reports of the proceedings in the various sections are on Page 11.)