

## THE ANTARCTIC.

### AUSTRALASIAN EXPEDITION.

#### ADDRESS BY DR. MAWSON.

SYDNEY, January 12.

"Preliminary arrangements are being made for the equipment and dispatch of the Australasian expedition to explore the antarctic continent between Cape Adare and Gauss Berg," said Dr. Mawson, who is to lead the expedition, in the course of an address on Antarctica at the Science Congress to-day. Professor Masson presided. He believed that if this expedition were successfully organized, and Dr. Mawson placed at the head of it, one of two things would happen. Either he would do something creditable to himself and Australia, or he would leave his bones at the south pole.

For many years, said Dr. Mawson, expeditions from Australia had been contemplated, but had never realized Australian support. It was not, however, that the spirit of enterprise was lacking. The apparent apathy was due to the unfamiliar conditions of Antarctica and the absence until recently of reliable data relating thereto. The bearing of antarctic meteorology on Australian weather was apparent to all, and the long particular coast to be investigated by this expedition was suitable for a far south station. From a scientific point of view there was no other part of the antarctic which so much deserved examination. There was also a considerable prospect of an economic return from whale and seal products and from guano and mineral wealth. The geographical position of this land and the privileges of Australians in taking advantage of its economic products rendered the collection and elaboration of scientific data therefrom obligatory upon them. The Australian contingent which accompanied Sir Ernest Shackleton on his recent expedition showed what could be done by Australians with no previous experience of polar work. Now that they had gained this experience it would be a pity for Australia to lose advantage of it.

Dr. Mawson, continuing, said—"I spent the first half of last year in Europe discussing the subject with the leading polar explorers and enquiring into all the details requisite for an antarctic expedition. This is to be aimed at a scientific and economic investigation of that great unexplored mountainous coast lying down south of Australia. Sir Ernest Shackleton aided in the preliminary arrangements for co-operation in scientific work which have been discussed with Capt. Scott. The dispatch of an Australian expedition will be an important episode in our history, for it is an undertaking which at least will stimulate the spirit of maritime enterprise, which is an indispensable element of national greatness. If ever in the history of Australasia an expedition is to set out in favourable circumstances, and with the future well assured of success, it must be immediately. No time is to be lost. So surely as it lapses for the moment foreign nations will step in and secure this most valuable portion of the antarctic continent for themselves, and forever from the control of Australia. I am fully prepared, and preliminary arrangements have been made, to set out from Australia at the end of November next. The work will take 17 months—one winter and two summers, or possibly two winters and three summers—before the realization of one of the greatest scientific events in the history of Australia, viz., the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science to take place in Australia in 1914. The importance to Australia of being able to present the results of such an expedition at that meeting cannot be overestimated.

"The large amount of money required is a great barrier to the enterprise. It will mean a total sum of £40,000. This is, however, no insuperable obstacle; indeed, many wealthy Australians would not feel the loss of the whole amount in smaller sums. It would not require the co-operation of many individuals to secure the doing of deeds that would build for themselves an everlasting name, and produce books full of stir and achievement of a new era of effort and progress, greater than any in the past. Can our scientific societies remain content to allow distant countries to poach on their inherited preserves; can Australia remain heedless of this land of great potentialities lying at our doors; can our national conscience remain unshaken in the face of achievements to be accomplished—achievements such as have ever formed gardens in the Constitutions of nations?"

Professor Masson said he hoped nothing would be left undone to make Dr. Mawson's appeal effective. He added that it was for Australians to support what was to be a peculiarly Australian expedition, particularly because they happened to be that part of the British nation which resided nearest to the proposed field of investigation.

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S OPPORTUNITY

Dr. Mawson's appeal for £40,000 to equip an Australian expedition for antarctic exploration is not likely to fall on deaf ears. Australians pride themselves on their patriotism, and here is a chance to demonstrate it in a practical way. The spirit of adventure and conquest is still alive, and Australia of the three great continents that lie below the equator is to lead in the enterprise. It is up to South Australia to make a worthy response. This is the homeland of the leader (Dr. Mawson), and a golden opportunity is thus presented, not only to assist in the proposed expedition, but to show appreciation for his past services in the cause of science. The President of the Royal Geographical Society (Mr. A. W. Piper), when questioned on Thursday, said—"I shall shortly bring the subject of Dr. Mawson's proposed Australian antarctic expedition before the council of the society, where I am sure the scheme will receive every encouragement. To my mind Australia owes a duty to herself as the nation of the Southern Hemisphere to promote scientific antarctic exploration. The results must be beneficial, whether they include economic and commercial fruits or not. I hope Dr. Mawson will soon prove that the £40,000 required is, as he says, no insuperable obstacle." The Chancellor of the University (His Honor Sir Samuel Way, Bart.) spared a few moments out of a busy day to commend the project. "Naturally the University is very much impressed," he said, "and will do all in its power to facilitate Dr. Mawson in his undertaking. Of course the personal equation comes in. Dr. Mawson is one of the scientific staff, whose achievements have shed lustre on the institution. The council granted him leave of absence to accompany the former expedition, and intends to follow the same course again on this occasion."

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## AUSTRALIA AND THE ANTARCTIC.

At the Science Congress in Sydney on Wednesday Dr. Douglas Mawson explained his scheme for an Australasian expedition to Antarctica. Apparently, the distinguished young scientist's enthusiasm is infectious, for the reception accorded to his proposal strongly encourages the hope that the £40,000 needed to cover the cost of the enterprise will be raised in the Commonwealth and New Zealand, and that a company of daring explorers will start southward before the end of the year. The project is a natural outcome of the active participation of a few Australians in the memorable Shackleton expedition which located the South Magnetic Pole. As the petrologist of that party Dr. Mawson won deserved fame and exhibited in remarkable degree the peculiar qualifications essential to successful research work in the Polar regions. The severe privations and hardships inseparable from long journeys over vast fields of broken ice were cheerfully endured, because his mind and imagination were fired with love of adventure and an irrepressible desire to probe mysteries previously unrevealed. Nature's stern resolve to exclude humanity from the Antarctic acts as a spur to men of the stamp of Dr. Mawson to make repeated and determined efforts to compel her to yield up her stores of treasure. The true explorer is under the sway of a mighty impulse, which, as it accords with the higher intuitions of his soul, must be obeyed. Some men are as surely "raised up" to be geographers and scientists, as are others to be eminent rulers and religious and social benefactors, and it is the duty of a discriminating public to facilitate the performance of their missions. In this

case, the antecedents of the explorer demonstrate that he is well entitled to confidence and support in the prosecution of his important enterprise.

The objects of the expedition will be scientific and economic. It will make no dash for the Pole, but will explore the 2,400 miles of coastline between Cape Adare and Gauss Berg, the point in Kaiser Wilhelm Land at which the German expedition of 1901 wintered. Its work is expected to fill in the gaps between the achievements of the parties led by Shackleton and Gauss. At present all the coastline referred to is unexplored. The small portions marked on the map were sighted in the distance by various expeditions and navigators. These chartings are untrustworthy, as no landing was ever made except by Dumont d'Urville and his companions. In 1840 Wilkes mapped a continent

with high mountains close to the coast, but Ross afterwards sailed over the places where the mountains were supposed to be located! The land to be traversed lies due south of Australia, which is the nearest civilised country to it. Dr. Mawson's plans provide that the first spot touched will be Cape Adare. Thence the explorers will journey westward, and establish bases at intervals until Gauss Bay is reached, the main base being in Adelle Land, almost directly south of Adelaide. From these bases sledge and motor trips will be made inland, and by this means it is hoped to thoroughly examine and survey the whole region. It is calculated that the bases will be within the range of the wireless telegraphic station at the Bluff, New Zealand. Dr. Mawson says that from a scientific point of view no other part of the Antarctic deserves so much attention. There is also a considerable prospect of an economic return from whale and seal products, and from guano and mineral deposits. The geographical position of this land and the privileges of Australians taking advantage of its products render the collection and elaboration of scientific data therefrom obligatory upon them. This is the right spirit in which to regard the subject, and it remains for patriotic stewards of wealth generously and wisely to foster an undertaking which will certainly reflect honour upon those associated with it. Australia's relations to the Antarctic require her people to take a practical interest in the future of lands which, as the work of exploration rapidly proceeds, are becoming more easily accessible to the agencies of civilization. The Geographical Societies of Australasia will probably lead the way towards the realization of a scheme which appeals alike to scientists and all public-spirited citizens. Australia would indeed have cause for commendable pride if at the meeting of the British Association in the Commonwealth in 1914, Dr. Mawson should be in a position to detail the valuable accomplishments of an Australasian Antarctic expedition.