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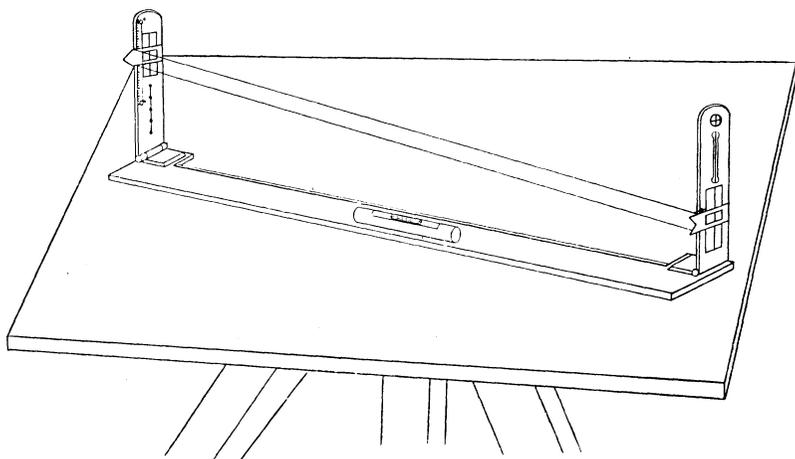


FIG. 8.—ORDINARY PLANE-TABLE ALIDADE FITTED WITH THE NEW ATTACHMENT.

pattern as shown in Fig. 8. It has been found that very fair work can be done with this simple form.

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## THE AUSTRALIAN ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION.\*

By HUGH ROBERT MILL, D.Sc.

THE facts regarding the Australasian Antarctic Expedition have been so fully set out by the leader, Sir Douglas Mawson, in a recent number of the *Geographical Journal*, that this review may be more usefully devoted to an appreciation of its place in the work of opening up Antarctica than to the recapitulation of now familiar details. The scientific results can best be considered when they are published in full.

The brilliant achievements of Sir James Clark Ross during the immortal voyage of the *Erebus* and *Terror*, naturally attracted the main forces of reviving Antarctic exploration to the splendid opening of the Ross sea through which Borchgrevink, Scott, Shackleton, Amundsen, and finally, Scott again, carried the quest of the South Pole from the sea to the land and over the land to the very goal itself. Since the South Pole was often viewed as the end as well as the aim of all Antarctic discovery, it is not unnatural that some lovers of exploration before the publication of this work should have viewed the South Polar regions as exhausted of their secret and their charm. But though the search of the Pole has

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\* 'The Home of the Blizzard.' By Sir Douglas Mawson. London: William Heinemann. 2 vols. 1915. 36s. net.

been a worthy and a mighty motive towards exploration, attainment even here has brought no end, but only a new beginning, and in truth the Pole is only a point, while the continent of everlasting ice is girt by an unknown perimeter of more than 10,000 miles.

The Australasian Antarctic Expedition described in these magnificent volumes, aimed at a less sensational but a no less worthy object than its forerunners. It was designed to explore the portion of the Antarctic continent lying to the south of Australia, a region, the physical conditions of which were only guessed at, but were known to exercise a vital influence on the weather of Australia and New Zealand, which once elucidated would extend our knowledge of the meteorology of the whole world. Curiously enough, the reason why this nearest portion of Antarctica to the temperate territories of the British Empire remained practically unknown until the commencement of the second decade of the twentieth century is psychological rather than physical. At the beginning of the Victorian period when the study of terrestrial magnetism demanded exploration towards the south magnetic pole, it was precisely to this area that the expeditions of Wilkes and Ross were primarily directed, and it was here also that Dumont D'Urville, in a fine spirit of adventure, carried his ships after he had fulfilled the letter of his obligations regarding Antarctic exploration, and when he was free to throw his whole strength into the exploration of the tropical Pacific which was his own peculiar and beloved field, and the main object of his expedition. Along this section, too, Baleny, in 1839, had sailed his tiny vessels from east to west after discovering the islands that bear his name. Before the *Erebus* and *Terror* reached Hobart on their way out, Dumont D'Urville had landed on a rocky islet and named Adelle Land, while Wilkes' squadron had laid down a lengthy coast-line with many names of lands and capes. It only wanted Ross's consummate Polar seamanship to open out this coast to the knowledge of the world in 1840, but fortunately for the future progress of the larger explorations he felt himself at liberty to disregard the letter of his instructions, and, as he puts it, "impressed with the feeling that England had ever led the way of discovery in the southern as well as in the northern regions, I considered it would have been inconsistent with the pre-eminence she had ever attained, if we were to follow in the footsteps of the expedition of any other nation. I therefore resolved at once to avoid all interference with their discoveries, and selected a much more easterly meridian (170° E.), on which to endeavour to penetrate to the southward, and if possible reach the magnetic pole."

Now that Australia has grown to a maturity which permits the pursuit of intellectual as well as of material ambitions, we find the work passed over by Ross taken up by Australian men of science equipped with all the advantages for exploration which have been perfected in the intervening seventy years. Sir Douglas Mawson's Antarctic Expedition, moreover, was also the first Australasian scientific expedition beyond the confines of the

Australian continent to challenge comparison with exploration British in the narrower sense and with that of other nations. This fact has a peculiar historical interest, for when the problem of an Antarctic continent took form upon the maps of the sixteenth century, Australia itself was within the veil which shrouded the remoter regions of the southern hemisphere. In the map of Orontius Finné, 1531, it does not want much imagination to divine the outline of our present Australia in the Regio Patalis of the great southern continent which bears the motto still freshly true of the central core "Terra Australis recenter inventa sed nondum plene cognita."

The first voyage of Captain James Cook laid the foundations of the first colony of Australia, and we now see by what historic irony the development of the Commonwealth has stultified the rash conclusion of Cook's second voyage, which convinced him that any continent which might exist around the Southern Pole would always remain sealed up in its ice unknown to man.

Sir Douglas Mawson served his Polar apprenticeship in the Northern Party of Sir Ernest Shackleton's Expedition of 1908, when he accompanied Professor Edgeworth David on his great march to the south magnetic pole, and the experience gained on this journey, the first on which Antarctic explorers depended on seals and penguins for food and fuel after their own stores gave out, naturally directed his attention to overland exploration. He took, however, a much wider outlook than this in planning the Australasian Expedition, making ample provision for land exploration which he hoped to carry out from three separate points on the coast, but reserving an almost equal share of attention for exploration by sea along the coast and oceanographical investigations in the section of the Southern ocean south of Australia. He also formed the daring design of keeping in touch with home by means of wireless telegraphy, and for this purpose established an intermediate station on Macquarie Island, hitherto known only to sealers. The difficulty experienced in conducting the wireless work at the Antarctic station on Commonwealth Bay made communication irregular, but in the second winter many messages were exchanged between Australia and the headquarters of the expedition, while meteorological reports were contributed daily from Macquarie Island to the weather offices of Australia and New Zealand. The chapters by Mr. G. F. Ainsworth, who was in charge at Macquarie Island, give a fascinating account of the dreary sub-Antarctic island, and of the investigations and privations of the light-hearted scientific party who spent two years there. We hope that the more absorbing interest of the other parts of the book will not divert attention from this most excellent and essential portion of the expedition's work.

Sir Douglas Mawson was exceedingly fortunate in having as commander of the ship and second in command of the expedition Captain John King Davis, who had showed himself to be a born ice-navigator while an officer of the *Nimrod* in the Shackleton Expedition, and in command of that ship

on her voyage home. Captain Davis combined the qualities of a good seaman with a genuine love of exploration, and a determination to advance the science of oceanography on every possible occasion, and he proved himself worthy of the distinction of conducting the first steamer which ever entered the 1500 miles of ice-encumbered sea between the furthest point reached by the *Terra Nova* on the east and the famous southern dash of the *Challenger* in search of Wilkes's Termination Land on the west. An account of the preliminary results of the oceanographical work of the first cruise was communicated to the *Geographical Journal* \* by Captain Davis in 1913, but some very interesting aspects of his work in high latitudes still await discussion.

In the volumes before us, repeated reference is made to the work of Wilkes's squadron in 1840, and we hope that Captain Davis may find it possible at some future date to annotate Wilkes's narrative from his own experience, as the historical interest lies mainly in the new light which is thrown on the old controversy as to whether Wilkes saw the mainland of the Antarctic continent. Into this matter it would not be fair to go fully on the strength of the popular narrative, but for two short stretches in the neighbourhood of Wilkes's charted discoveries, detailed charts are given showing the tracts of the *Aurora* and of the American ships.

The first of these in Vol. 1, p. 73, shows that the *Aurora* ran to the south of the track of Wilkes's *Vincennes* along the assigned position of Tottens High Land in 120° E., without seeing any sign of it, and she was also far to the south of Wilkes on the western side of the charted North's High Land in 124° E., and here again nothing was seen. Captain Davis was, however, unable to get so far south as Wilkes in the neighbourhood of Knox's High Land in 107° E., so that no fresh evidence is available on this point, and Wilkes must be credited with the discovery of land here unless it should be disproved in the future. Captain Davis got a short distance further south than Wilkes or Ringgold in the position of Budd's High Land in 112° E., and nothing was seen of it. Wilkes's Cape Carr, like D'Urville's Côte Clairie and the hypothetical Sabrina Land, was sailed over, but high land was discovered to the south-westward in 135° E., which Wilkes would undoubtedly have reached had the sea been less encumbered with ice in January, 1840, and to this Sir Douglas Mawson gives the name of Wilkes Land, of which we are glad, as it would be a deplorable thing if the name of so gallant and deserving an explorer as Wilkes were not perpetuated in the region of his great endeavour. In the exact position of Wilkes's Repulse Bay of the ice barrier (whence he believed he sighted the high land named Termination Land) a great ice tongue was found rigidly locked to the land south of it, and on the south-west of this Termination ice tongue the western party was landed.

It is to be hoped that a summary of the log of the *Aurora* with the

\* Vol. 42, p. 361.

daily positions will appear among the scientific results of the Australasian expedition, accompanied by a chart on a sufficiently large scale to show clearly the tracts of all the few ships which have entered those waters. It is only from the study of such a chart that it would be possible to discuss the question whether, on account of abnormal atmospheric conditions, Wilkes or his officers may not have seen the land of the Antarctic continent at some points and underestimated its distance. In any case we do not think that any fellow-countryman of Wilkes can consider that his work has been ignored or lightly esteemed either by Sir Douglas Mawson or by Captain Davis.

The *Aurora* on her various voyages only cruised to the south of the Antarctic circle for a distance less than  $10^\circ$  of longitude in the neighbourhood of Adelie Land, but when proceeding westwards with Mr. Wild's party in 1912, and again while going to his relief in 1913, she sailed for more than  $50^\circ$  of longitude south of the  $60^\circ$  parallel, and for almost all that distance her course lay close along the parallel of  $65^\circ$ .

The second voyage to the westward in this high latitude was on the whole slightly to the northward of the first, and although of less interest as regards the discovery of land, some soundings were obtained which suggest that a continental shelf considerably deeper than that which surrounds the northern continents runs along the front of that section of Antarctica. The description of this voyage is one of the most thrilling chapters in the book, though Captain Davis characteristically refrains from "working up" the emotional interest. His brief and convincing statement of the five reasons which satisfied him that it was his duty to wait no longer for an opportunity of taking off the leader of the expedition and his party at the main base, but to proceed at once to the relief of Wild and his companions at the western base deserves to live in the history of exploration. The perils from wind and ice which beset the whole of that voyage in a ship too light for safe navigation in a storm and without anchors (they had all been lost in attempting to ride out the hurricanes in Commonwealth bay) compares in everything, except its curt conciseness, with the most moving passages in Ross's narrative of the *Erebus*.

In one point only did the expedition fall short of the programme. Sir Douglas Mawson very wisely decided, after reaching Adelie Land, that instead of two subsidiary bases on the coast of Antarctica one was all that could be justified, considering the difficulties of reaching a given point on the ice-beset and fog-veiled coast-line. He himself, with seventeen companions, landed at Commonwealth bay in Adelie Land at a point where both D'Urville and Wilkes had sighted unmistakable land. The second party, numbering eight all told, was landed on the Shackleton ice shelf between the Termination ice tongue and Drygalski's Kaiser Wilhelm II. Land under the leadership of Mr. F. Wild, who may justly claim to be a naturalized inhabitant of Antarctica, as he is a veteran of the *Discovery* and *Nimrod* Expeditions, and after his return from the *Aurora* has again

gone out with Sir Ernest Shackleton on his 1914–15 expedition. Wild made good use of his twelve months' residence in this region, which has been named Queen Mary Land, the sledge journeys carried out by the party extending mainly between the parallels of 66° and 67° of latitude as far as 89° E., where they visited Drygalski's Gaussberg, and 99° E., where they discovered the Denman glacier rising amongst mountains of about 4000 feet in height, and the seaward slopes were for Antarctica very fully explored and mapped throughout a distance of 250 miles from east to west, and 50 miles from north to south, a very notable achievement.

From the main base Sir Douglas Mawson organized a series of great simultaneous land expeditions with many minor journeys in support, or for the purpose of detailed investigations.

Starting from the main base in lat. 67° S., long. 143° E., the southern party, consisting of Mr. Bage with Messrs. Webb and Hurley, reached a point in lat. 70° 30' S. and long. 148° E., and an altitude of 5900 feet upon the plateau. None of the other expeditions reached so high a latitude as 70°, their object being to explore the coast-line on the sea-ice and on the upper slopes of the plateau parallel to the coast. This was done on the east over King George V. Land as far as 152° E., and on the west in Adelie Land as far as 138° E., a range of 14° in longitude. The result was thus to map out a block of coast and plateau measuring about 370 miles from east to west and 250 from north to south. To enter into details regarding these land journeys would be to repeat what has already appeared in this *Journal*, but reference must be made to the able manner in which Mr. Bickerton, with Messrs. Hodgeman and Whetter, carried out the main western journey, and Mr. Madigan with Dr. McLean and Mr. Correll accomplished the eastern journey over the sea-ice and the bewildering confusion of the splintered glacier tongues. In all these the explorers were in peril of crevasses and in peril of blizzards, and their movements were strictly limited by their food supplies. But like the party at the western base, the men themselves did not suffer any permanent harm, and all returned in health and safety to the base in time to meet the relief ship.

The tragedy which befell Sir Douglas Mawson's party, who were engaged on the main eastern journey over the high plateau, was the one disaster of the expedition, and undoubtedly to the general public the interest of the book centres in the moving account of the engulfment of Lieut. Ninnis in an unsuspected crevasse, and in the long-drawn misery of the return march, during which illness broke down the strength of Dr. Mertz, and in the unexampled endurance of Sir Douglas Mawson himself when, after the death of his companion and the loss of all his dogs, he struggled on alone for 24 days until he reached the ice cave near the base.

These experiences recall the most terrible privations and struggles of early Arctic explorers. They have naturally been seized upon by reviewers in the press and perhaps convey to those who have not read the book the

impression that the expedition, as a whole, was spent in gloom and in the shadow of death. A perusal of the volumes dissipates this impression; the disasters were such as every member of every Antarctic land expedition has repeatedly escaped by a hair's breadth, and considering the extent of the ground traversed and the number of parties in the field, one cannot help wondering rather at the extraordinary immunity from accident or privations than at the loss of two members of the party, and the suffering of the leader in his heroic struggle alone in the ice desert with the blasts and the mist and the imminent presence of "the Arch-Fear in a visible form."

The result of the land journeys has been to block out two long stretches of the Antarctic coast, leaving no room for doubt as to the character of the remaining land seen between King George V. Land and Cape North by the *Terra Nova* and named Oates Land from the hero of Scott's last expedition. No doubt remains either that similar conditions prevail westwards through the Wilkes Land sighted by the *Aurora*, but between that and Queen Mary Land there intervenes a stretch of at least 800 miles, concerning which nothing is known save that the soundings of the *Aurora* indicate that the continent runs continuously across. So little room for doubt can exist as to the character of this portion of the continent that it would seem less useful now to press for further exploration in that quarter when the stress of war permits the resumption of exploration. The tracts which now demand the attention of Antarctic navigators are the 2500 miles between Kaiser Wilhelm II. Land and Coats Land, and the 1800 miles between Alexander I. Land and King Edward VII. Land which no steamer has yet entered. We trust that before the subordinates on the Australasian Expedition have grown too old for the reasonable aspiration to lead expeditions of their own, the spirit of Australia will call them to these tasks.

The descriptive narratives of recent Antarctic expeditions have appeared so soon after the completion of the work, that it was scarcely fair to look critically upon their literary style, although in both Scott's and Shackleton's work there are many passages and some chapters which will live as literature. In the present case the outbreak of war has caused a considerable delay in the appearance of 'The Home of the Blizzard,' a delay which is wholly advantageous so far as the permanent value of the book is concerned, and will not, we believe, deprive the volumes of any of their powerful human interest.

Sir Douglas Mawson has shown a wise and generous discretion in allowing his senior assistants to write the chapters describing their own work; this gives a fine edge of freshness and vivacity to the necessary repetition of details which cannot fail to read monotonously when written throughout by the same hand, however capable. Sir Douglas Mawson also recognized that the born explorer or investigator has not always the gift of a facile pen. As on the *Discovery* expedition the editorship of the

*South Polar Times* first drew attention to Sir Ernest Shackleton's power of literary arrangement and vivid description, so the production of the *Adelie Blizzard* which kept up the spirits of the winter party in Commonwealth Bay, brought to light the exceptional literary gift of Dr. A. L. McLean, who has seen the volumes through the press, and by his revision has secured that degree of homogeneity without which the work of a group of authors, different in their powers of expression and in the range of their vocabulary, would inevitably have become disjointed and displeasing.

Dr. McLean's foreword gives a fair sample of his command of language and an insight into his poetic outlook on the ideals of modern exploration, while many fine pieces of word-painting throughout the narrative testify to his appreciation of the imaginative aspects of the play of light and colour in Antarctic scenery.

The maps on various scales which set out the cruises of the *Aurora* and the tracks of the sledge parties reflect the greatest credit on Mr. A. J. Hodgeman, the cartographer of the expedition. The photographic illustrations have never been surpassed either in technical perfection or artistic grouping; the only regret which they inspire is, that as usual the shape of the photographic plates too frequently involved the printing of two pictures on one page, giving somewhat the effect of two paintings in one frame. The photographic work shows that Mr. J. F. Hurley, the official photographer of the expedition, is a master of his art, and the description of the difficulties under which he usually worked shows how cleverly he learned to adapt his methods to his difficult environment. The reproduction of photographs in natural colours is extraordinarily successful. The publisher has given a worthy setting to this unique assemblage of scientific, literary and artistic work, enshrining as it does a story of daring adventure and heroic endurance saddened by tragedy, second only to that of the Scott expedition, and relieved by a fresh and light-hearted humour which makes the reader proud to belong to an Empire the most distant states of which produce such sons.

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## REVIEWS.

### EUROPE.

#### GLOUCESTERSHIRE AND SOMERSETSHIRE MAPS.

'A Descriptive Catalogue of the Printed Maps of Gloucestershire, 1577-1911, with Biographical Notes.' (*Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society* for 1912, vol. 35.) Pp. 238, and 12 plates. [Bristol, 1913.]

'A Descriptive List of the Printed Maps of Somersetshire, 1575-1914.' Pp. xii. + 231, and 16 plates. Taunton: published by the Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society. 1914. 10s.

By Thomas Chubb, of the Map Room, British Museum.

THESE catalogues of the maps of two of our English counties continue the work of the author in this department of cartographical research commenced