The Crozets

Author(s): W. Botting Hemsley

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Chile Boundary Arbitration; and he again accompanies Sir Thomas Holdich this year to lay down the boundary decided upon. Captain Dickson will therefore be unable to reply to Mr. Mackinder's strictures for some time.—Ed. *G.J.*]

The Crozets.

In connection with Prof. von Drygalski's narrative of the voyage of the *Gauss* from Cape Town to Kerguelen (*Geographical Journal*, ante, pp. 39-42), it may be of interest to repeat here some of the facts known concerning the flora of the Crozets, especially as he was under the impression that "no human foot had ever before trod this solitary strand."

Although the *Challenger* Expedition equally with Sir James Ross's failed to effect a landing on this group, I brought together all that I could find relating to the vegetation in the 'Botany of the Challenger Expedition' (i. part 2, pp. 207-210), in order to compare it with that of Prince Edward, Kerguelen, and Macdonald groups. Eight species of plants were then known to inhabit Possession island, six of which were collected by the officers of the United States ship *Monangahela*, and two by Captain J. N. East, of H.M.S. *Comus*, who examined the Crozets in 1880 in order to ascertain if any shipwrecked persons were there. The eight plants are—*Pringlea antiscorbutica* (Cruciferae); *Acæna adscendens* (Rosaceae); *Azorella Selago* (Umbelliferae); *Galium antarcticum* (Rubiaceae); *Cotula plumosa* (Compositae); *Lomaria alpina* and *Asplenium obtusatum* (Filices); and *Andræa marginata*? a moss. These plants are all widely spread in the highest southern latitudes of phanerogamic vegetation, extending both to the South American and New Zealand outlying islands, or to one or the other of these regions, except *Pringlea antiscorbutica*, which has only been found in Marion, Possession, Kerguelen, and Heard islands.

Captain East reported to the secretary of the Admiralty that the "Kerguelen cabbage" was abundant on Possession island, and also a plant called "red-root," on which, the pilot who had spent some years in the islands assured him, human beings could not only exist, but get fat. Specimens of the two ferns named above, collected by Captain East, are in the Kew Herbarium, where there are also specimens of *Pringlea antiscorbutica* and *Azorella Selago* from Possession island. They were sent alive by Mr. J. M'Gibbon, at that date superintendent of the Botanic Garden, Cape Town, who obtained them through the master of one of the vessels trading to the islands; but as they died on the passage to Kew, they were dried and preserved.

In addition to the eight plants enumerated above, the Americans saw "a small vine with blue flowers," of which, however, they preserved no specimen, and I cannot hazard a guess at what it might be. The sealers in this region informed the officers of the *Challenger* Expedition that rabbits and hogs abounded in the islands, but both were unpalatable because of their food.

W. BOTTING HEMSLEY,
Herbarium, Kew.