

Register, eBay 10th 1909

RECEPTION AT THE TOWN HALL.

ENTHUSIASTIC GATHERING.

The President of the South Australian branch of the Geographical Society (Mr. W. B. Wilkinson) and the council issued invitations to a reception, which was tendered to Lieut. Shackleton at the Adelaide Town Hall at 11.30 a.m. on Saturday. Seats were reserved for members of the society and their friends. The public were admitted to the body of the hall and the gallery. The auditorium was crowded. Mr. W. B. Wilkinson presided. He was supported on his right by His Excellency the Governor, Mr. Douglas Mawson, His Honor the Chief Justice, Messrs. W. P. Auld, E. H. Bakewell, A. M. Simpson, and Simpson Newland, and on his left by Lieut. Shackleton, the Acting Premier (Hon. A. H. Peake), the Prime Minister (R. P. Fisher), the Mayor of Adelaide (Mr. Frank Johnson), the Chief Secretary (Hon. F. S. Wallis, M.L.C.), the Minister for Water Supply (Hon. J. G. Bice, M.L.C.), the Hon. Federal Minister (R. P. Hutchison), Messrs. MacGillivray, M.P., A. W. Dobbie, and T. S. Reed.

—The Chairman's Welcome.—

The Chairman said they all felt that it was a very great privilege and pleasure to welcome Lieut. Shackleton on his return from the successful expedition to the antarctic regions, and to congratulate him most heartily upon the splendid work achieved. (Cheers.) They also congratulated Mr. Douglas Mawson on his brilliant scientific achievements. (Cheers.) Many of them had the pleasure of meeting Lieut. Shackleton on his arrival from England on November 30, 1907, and of wishing him godspeed on his perilous undertaking. They had watched with the deepest interest all that had happened since that date. They remembered that the stout little Nimrod left Lyttelton, New Zealand, on January 1, 1908, with the members of the expedition on board; that after a tempestuous voyage she landed them at Cape Royds, McMurdo Sound, on February 3, and returned to New Zealand. From that date until the end of March of this year not a word was heard from the south polar regions. An absolute silence reigned for over 13 months. They all felt some anxiety during the period, but it was difficult to imagine with what anxiety the relatives and near friends of the members of the expedition must have looked for news. On March 23 a cable was received from Stewart's Island that the Nimrod had arrived from the antarctic, that the members of the expedition were on board, and that "all were well." (Cheers.) It was not too much to say that a thrill of joy and thankfulness was experienced when this news was made known. (Cheers.) For several days following the thrilling story of the expedition was unfolded in the daily press throughout the civilized world. The press agreed upon the importance of the achievements recorded, whilst scientists were unanimously of opinion that much had been added to the store of knowledge on geographical and scientific subjects. Congratulatory cables were showered upon the leader from all parts. Her Majesty the

Queen, with her usual graciousness, cabled congratulations, and said how gladly she would receive from Lieut. Shackleton on his return to England the Union Jack which she had entrusted to his care, and which he had hoisted at the most southerly portion of the earth's surface ever reached by man. (Cheers.) He thought that if the readers of the news of the success of the expedition could have all joined together in sending a cable to the leader that cable would have read, "Well done, Shackleton." (Cheers.) The story of the expedition was fresh in all their minds. It was a story that would ever occupy an honoured page in the history of great deeds. He must not, however, dwell upon the details; but there were three events that were worthy of special mention. There was the ascent of Mount Erebus, a height of 13,300 ft., by a party led by that great scientist, Professor David, and in which Mr. Douglas Mawson, of the Adelaide University, distinguished himself so brilliantly. (Cheers.) There was the reaching of the south magnetic pole, where the British flag was hoisted, and three cheers were given for His Majesty the King. In that expedition Professor David and Mr. Mawson again took a most prominent part. Then there was the dash for the south pole by a party comprising Lieut. Shackleton, Lieut. S. B. Adams, Dr. Marshall, and Mr. Wild. The party left Cape Royds on October 29, 1908, and after great hardships and privations, battling against severe blizzards, with the thermometer registering from 60 to 72 deg. of frost, in what was described as the coldest and stormiest weather in the world, they literally fought their way until they reached, on a plateau some 10,500 ft. in height, the farthest south ever attained. (Cheers.) That was in lat. 88.23, a distance of only 97 geographical miles from the south pole. There they hoisted the Union Jack presented by the Queen, and began their wearisome journey back to Cape Royds. When within a few days' journey from the camp Dr. Marshall became so ill that it was impossible for him to proceed further. Lieut. Shackleton left him in charge of Lieut. Adams, whilst he, accompanied by Mr. Wild, made a forced march for the camp. This they reached after two days and two nights' struggle, and, although weary and in a semi-starved condition, Lieut. Shackleton, after spending one hour in the camp, actually started out again at the head of a relief party, and eventually reached and rescued his sick companion. (Loud cheers.) It was a splendid achievement indeed, after a journey of 1,708 miles, occupying in all 124 days, during which the leader had never had his clothes off. It was for deeds such as this that Shackleton was described by members of the party as a perfect leader. (Cheers.) It was not simply because Lieut. Shackleton had attained a "farthest south" record that they welcomed him that morning. It was also because they knew him to be a brave man, a man who had the courage to undertake a great enterprise, and the grim determination to carry it out to a successful issue. (Cheers.) Above all, it was because they recognised him as a great and humane leader, and they rejoiced to know that the name of Ernest Shackleton would be added to that roll of fame in which the names of Franklin, Ross, McInlock, Nansen, Abruzzi, Scott, and other great polar explorers were already engraved. (Cheers.)

—His Excellency's Tribute.—

His Excellency said:—We are assembled here to-day to honour and welcome among us the leader of a band of brothers who, by their courage and physical endurance, have achieved, at the imminent risk of their lives, a voyage of discovery second to none in the annals of polar exploration and scientific research. We desire to congratulate most heartily Lieut. Shackleton upon the successful result of the expedition under his command. Lieut. Shackleton had already experience of antarctic discovery in Capt. Scott's expedition. When it was determined, with assistance liberally provided by the Commonwealth resources, to make a further effort to reach the south pole and to ascertain the position of the southern magnetic pole, Lieut. Shackleton accepted the command of this expedition. Before finally leaving England the Nimrod was anchored in Cowes Roads during the regatta week in August, 1907, when their Majesties honoured the expedition by visiting the ship and presenting a flag. At that time I happened to be present as Commander-in-Chief of Portsmouth, and, together with Lady Bosanquet, had the honour to wish them godspeed. (Cheers.) Although the scientific results of the expedition are not yet completely before the public, we have before us abundant evidence that Lieut. Shackleton and his comrades have been successful beyond the dreams any of their sympathizers. (Cheers.) The discovery of the magnetic pole, and the advance to within 97 miles of the true pole, are results which will cause the names of those connected with the Nimrod expedition to be remembered throughout the history of polar discovery, and to be bracketed with those of the great arctic explorers. The feat of maintaining throughout the long winter months the friendship and comradeship of every member of the expedition is a model for the example of all in the display of the moral qualities. It is second only to the qualities of courage and physical endurance throughout the summer months displayed by all those parties engaged in the sleighing expeditions employed in the work of exploration and discovery. (Cheers.) This stern determination, this firm resolution to succeed in spite of all obstacles, is as deserving of the name of patriotism as if the same qualities had been displayed by the commander of an army. A great general may conquer for his country a foreign foe and annex a principality, but here we have a continent annexed without the loss of a single life. I suppose we may now consider the south pole as a dependency of Australia, and a province of the British Empire. (Cheers.) I observe that although the main work of the expedition is concluded, the papers report that Lieut. Shackleton intends the Nimrod on her voyage home to search for and chart some of those southern groups of islands whose position is doubtful. Those on board the Nimrod will carry with them always our admiration for work already accomplished, and our best wishes for their future career. (Cheers.) I don't see that laurel wreath which the Mayor of Adelaide's predecessor promised to Lieut. Shackleton, but, anyhow, the State of South Australia is proud to welcome him and Mr. Mawson here in the Town Hall of Adelaide, and to congratulate them heartily on their successful achievements. We

look forward to hearing to-night an account of their explorations and discoveries, and we associate with the success of the Nimrod and her commander the names of David, Mawson, and Armitage, who are Australians, and who, we believe, greatly contributed to the signal success which has attended this expedition to the antarctic regions. (Cheers.)

—Speech by the Acting Premier.—

The Acting Premier (Hon. A. H. Peake) greeted Lieut. Shackleton and the members of his expedition present on behalf of the Government and the people of the State. They had followed the career of his party with great interest ever since they had left the shores of civilization with all the deeper interest because of the Australians, and one South Australian, who were associated with it. The name of the Nimrod would be associated for all time with those of the Erebus and the Terror as most highly placed in the annals of antarctic exploration. Endurance and courage had been spoken of, and if the party had done no more than show that those great qualities, which had helped so much in the past to make the British people and the Empire great, were still in existence when called for, they had made a noble contribution to the riches of a people. (Cheers.) He remembered having seen the picture of an old sailor, with his little granddaughter by his side, pointing to the north pole and

saying, "The north-west passage must be found, and England must find it." If the south pole was to be found he was sure that Britishers would find it. (Cheers.) His Excellency had stated that the discoveries made by Lieut. Shackleton's expedition had added a new province to the British Empire. Undoubtedly so, and when Australia became so thickly populated that they could spare some of the people to migrate, it would be possible to say, "There is no need to leave the British Empire; you can go to the south polar regions." (Laughter.) There were a few who could already be spared to go to those regions where ice was necessary to keep the mental faculties normal. (Laughter.) On behalf of the Government he wished to express the highest admiration for the deeds of Lieut. Shackleton and his expedition, and to rejoice that the party had been able to make such a noble contribution to the scientific, physical, and geographical knowledge as had been done. He hoped that Lieut. Shackleton would be spared for many years to do still further credit to himself and the British Empire. (Cheers.)

—On Behalf of the Citizens.—

The Mayor of Adelaide said he was there to voice a welcome from the citizens of Adelaide to Lieut. Shackleton on his triumphant return. He had now joined that band of intrepid explorers whose deeds might not have won Empire, but had added to the Empire islands, towns, and continents. Lieut. Shackleton was back from the antarctic well, strong, and hearty, a brother who had assisted in all the great and inspiring objects he had in view when he started, and in which he had succeeded beyond all possible ideas with which he set out. On behalf of the citizens of Adelaide he welcomed Lieut. Shackleton back again, and offered him a tribute of praise for the noble work done. (Hear, hear.) The expedition was a testimony to the world that the yeomen of the North of England had lost none of their ancient courage. He looked forward to the time—aye, that time had arrived—when not only that part of the British Empire, but Greater Britain beyond the seas, could find men prepared to risk their lives in these great deeds. (Cheers.) He looked forward to their own country supplying such men as Lieut. Shackleton, and such thoughts made them proud to belong to the good old stock whence they came. (Cheers.) His Excellency had referred to the fact that the Mayor of Adelaide at the time (Mr. Theodore Bruce) had promised a laurel wreath to place on Lieut. Shackleton's brow on his return. He did not know whether the wreath was there or not. Lieut. Shackleton had woven a wreath of laurel which would rest on his brow for all his life, the verdure of whose leaves would never wither, and the perfume of whose blossom would smell with a sweet savour in their nostrils all their lives. (Cheers.)

—Lieut. Shackleton's Reply.—

Lieut. Shackleton who, on rising to respond was warmly cheered, said so much had been said from the platform that day, and so many kindly words had been spoken, that he felt embarrassed in getting up to reply for the expedition. Full well he and every one of his companions, including Mr. Mawson, knew their limitations, and they knew they had not done all they had set out to do. They knew, also, that so kindly was the feeling in Australia, and also at home, that their shortcomings were overlooked and their work was appraised at perhaps far more than its value. (Voices—"No.") Although he, as leader

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