

MONEY IN WHALES

Although whaling in the Antarctic has long attracted attention as a profitable industry, it must have surprised many to learn, from Sir Douglas Mawson's latest dispatch, published in "The Advertiser" on Saturday, the extent to which it is carried on. The industry is in the hands of foreigners, mainly Norwegians, and employs (according to Sir Douglas) 42 factory ships, and 250 "chasers." There is, indeed, as Sir Douglas puts it, quite a rush to the "whaleries," recalling the old days of the gold fever. Any surprise that might at first be felt is dissipated by the statement that from the oil and bone a yearly revenue is derived of no less than £3,000,000. This huge traffic cannot be long continued without justifying the warning sounded at the recent Imperial Conference, and repeated by Sir Douglas, as to the danger to be apprehended from relentless exploitation of the only certain asset yet discovered in the Antarctic. It is a question of some concern to the Commonwealth, which, from its proximity to this region, and the labors of its own explorers, is entitled to a share in its resources.

This point was made a year or two ago by Sir Douglas Mawson, and was emphasised in January last by Mr. Addison, the Tasmanian Agent-General, in a communication transmitted to the Commonwealth Government. He thought it fair that a royalty to defray the cost of policing the areas concerned should be levied on this wealth; also that the territorial jurisdiction should be so apportioned as to secure to Australia the control of a section of these southern waters. In past years, New Zealand and the Falklands have profited by the use made of their shores by the whaling industry, but they have been robbed of the advantage by the multiplication of factory ships. In the first half of last century, whaling was one of the most profitable of Australian industries; but, even with the crude methods they employed, such havoc was wrought among the leviathans that the supply gradually gave out. In those days the inducement afforded by the lucrative markets open for the disposal of the sperm oil for lighting and other purposes, had a set-off in the dangers attendant on whaling. Boats were frequently destroyed by creatures maddened by thrusts of the harpoon. Stories of fighting whales fill the annals of Pacific adventure. The monsters were often identified. "Timor Jack," for example, is said to have destroyed every boat sent against him, at last, he was slain by stratagem. "New Zealand Tom," another historic cachelot, "made matchwood of nine boats before breakfast," and, when he was killed, the harpoons embedded in his blubber bore evidence of the many fights in which he had come off victorious. But such perilous encounters were done away with when Sven Foy, a Norwegian whaler, revolutionised the business by perfecting a gun which, firing a bomb harpoon, extinguished life instantaneously, rendering whaling at once safer and less costly. Compressed air was injected by the bombs, which brought the creatures to the surface, and saved many a valuable carcase from disappearing into fathomless depths. The revival of whaling on the present Brobdingnagian scale is said to be viewed with no great elation by those engaged in the copra industry in the Pacific, who fear that, just as whaling in its costly days suffered from their own competition, so, in turn, they may find themselves undermined by this revivification of a rival source of margarine, fertiliser, and other products.

HOMeward BOUND

Discovery Bowling Along Under Sail

AURORA DISPLAYS

CANBERRA, March 12.

(By wireless from Sir Douglas Mawson on board the Discovery.—All rights reserved.)

Having arrived in the belt of westerly winds, which extend around the Southern Hemisphere, between latitudes 40 and 60 degrees, our vessel is making splendid progress under sail.

[A later message from the Discovery stated that the ship was making such good progress that it might reach Hobart on March 21.]

A noon-to-noon run of 182 miles has been recorded during the last few days, which is considerably more than our steaming capacity.

Since the first of the month the winds have all been favorable for rapid progress towards Hobart.

In order better to ballast the vessel, all movable gear has been sent below as near to the keel as possible. With the same object in view, ashes from the boilers, have, for weeks past, been stowed in the holds after wetting and bagging.

Brilliant Auroras.

March opened with brilliant auroral displays on several successive evenings. Then came an anxious period of violent and protracted storms, in which the wind ranged from 55 to 70 miles an hour for three days.

An immense sea worked up, in which owing to its light condition, the ship plunged and rolled about extraordinarily. Water occasionally filled the waist of the ship, almost level across from bulwark to bulwark.

This splendid vessel, when well handled, and given a reasonable amount of ballast, is safe enough in a storm, but anxiety lay in the fact that, flying before the gale in the night hours, rendered impenetrably dark by driving sleet and a pall of cloud overhead, our little vessel had to run the gauntlet of random icebergs. Fortunately, under the hand of Providence, all ended well.

Valuable Data Obtained

To-day, in latitude 49, longitude 114, an excellent series of data was obtained from the surface to the bottom in 2,100 fathoms.

Marine life, however, was found to be unusually scarce, which, no doubt, accounted for the almost entire absence in this neighborhood of bird life, excepting an occasional wandering albatross.

Unfortunately, during this voyage to Australia, the shortage of coal for operating the deck engine placed strict limitations upon our programme of marine stations.

Wireless communication with Australia is now excellent. We are still regaled with interesting broadcast programmes from Saigon, which have come through nightly for some time past, even when communication with Australia was entirely suspended.

All on board are well. (Publication without permission, in whole or in part, in Australia or overseas, of this message, is strictly forbidden.)

MESSAGE FROM THE SEA

A drift message bottle was picked up on the beach about four miles south of Nora Criena Bay, 17 miles each way from Robe and Beachport, by Misses K. Pattullo and I. Robson, of Robe. The bottle contained the following message:—"This bottle was thrown overboard from S.Y. Discovery, Captain J. K. Davis, in latitude 39 degrees 40 minutes south, longitude 108 degrees 19 minutes east at 0 G.M.T. (Greenwich mean time), March 15, 1930." The message is being forwarded to the Meteorological Office, Air Ministry, London.

DISCOVERY AT HOBART

Five Tons of Coal Left in Bunkers

Hobart, March 19.

The Discovery, which sailed from Hobart for the Antarctic on November 24, returned here to-day, and was given an enthusiastic welcome. The vessel was cheered by ships' companies of the Australian Squadron, and was played into port by the band of the Australia.

Sir Douglas Mawson and all members of the expedition are in the best of health and spirits.

Sir Douglas said the vessel left the Antarctic somewhat earlier than it had anticipated because of coal shortage, and there were five tons in the bunkers when she reached port.

He said a large amount of added scientific material and data had been acquired, including that relating to the movement of the Magnetic Pole, which had shifted 100 miles to the north-west since his last visit.

The Discovery will remain at Hobart for several days to undergo engine and boiler repairs, and is expected to sail for Melbourne on Sunday. Meanwhile duplicate scientific specimens will be transferred to the R.M.S. Cathay, due here to-morrow, for shipment to England.

Plans of Mawson

"Anxious," Adelaide:—Will the necessary £12,000 be subscribed to send Sir Douglas Mawson on another trip to the Antarctic, or will this renowned Australian scientist and explorer ultimately be compelled to approach America to enable him to fulfil his ambitions? Like Sir Hubert Wilkins, probably he would be successful in this direction.

America, the only other nation, has secured a fair share of the markets of the world.

SUMMER CRUISES TO ANTARCTIC

"Picnics," Says Sir Douglas Mawson

"Apart from occasional hurricanes summer cruises in the Antarctic are really picnics teeming with interest," said Sir Douglas Mawson yesterday.

He was responding to a welcome extended to him and Professor Harvey Johnston by the Lord Mayor (Mr. C. J. Glover) in the Adelaide Town Hall on their return from the Antarctic.

Sir Douglas said the full scientific value of the expedition would not be apparent until the reports were available. At the same time, the economic results must not be overlooked, nor must the fact that the expedition had raised the flag over practically one-third of the Antarctic continent be overlooked (Applause.) Much of the success of the expedition was due to the whole-hearted co-operation of all members of the scientific staff and the officers and crew of the ship.

"We have added several new lands to the map," continued Sir Douglas, and mapped others in detail.

"Many well-known Adelaide names will appear on the new maps when they are published, including those of Sir George Murray, Sir William Mitchell, and Mr. A. A. Simpson.

"In the 1911 expedition and the two cruises of this expedition we have covered an arc of 110 degrees that practically no other expeditions have touched."

True Leader of Men

Professor Harvey Johnston said Sir Douglas had shown himself in every sense a true leader of men, with the result that the members of the expedition were a particularly happy family. Sir Douglas was also a born organiser, it was no wonder that the expedition had been a success.

DISCOVERY II. LEAVES LONDON

Will Call Here

LONDON, October 3.

The Discovery II. left for the Antarctic today. Hundreds of relatives and friends said farewell to the members of the crew.

The object of the trip is to make a scientific investigation into the whaling industry for the purpose of placing it on a sound commercial basis, and to secure data for improving Antarctic charts. The vessel will visit South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand.

For Whaling Research

Sir Douglas Mawson said last night that the trip would be the second made by the Discovery II. this year. She was a modern oil-burning vessel, fitted for long cruises, and had been built in 1929 for the whale research work being conducted by the Falkland Islands Government. The cruise would be controlled by the Colonial Office committee in London, on which there were representatives of the British Museum, the Falkland Islands, the Admiralty, and the Fisheries Board.

Not Fitted for Pack Ice

"Whereas oceanography was a secondary feature of our work in the Discovery," he added, "it will be the principal feature of the present cruise. The vessel is not fitted to go into the pack ice, but, of course, will visit any place easily reached. There is a danger of the whale becoming extinct if fishing is allowed to continue on the same scale as at present, and the scientists on board will study particularly its breeding habits, migrations, and peculiarities."

Sir Douglas Mawson has received a letter from Mr. James Marr, who was the hydrographer on the last cruise of the Discovery, stating that he is making the trip. Another whom he thinks will go is Dr. Stanley Kemp, who has been in charge of the whale research work being carried out in London with the object of restricting the whale fisheries, if there is any chance of them becoming extinct. He was surprised that the vessel was coming to Australia. "Previously," he said, "the work has been restricted to the seas south of the Atlantic."

CLIMATE FORETOLD FROM CURRENTS

Value of Research In Antarctic

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The study of ocean currents and the chemical properties of the sea by Mr. A. Howard (chemist and hydrologist with the recent Mawson Antarctic expedition) has yielded a great deal of information which will ultimately prove of value in predicting the climatic conditions of countries bordering the Southern Ocean, and the migrations of fish and whales.

In a report issued yesterday Mr. Howard said it had been found that cold water flowed from the Antarctic until it reached the region of strong westerly winds. There the cold water met warmer water from the north, and the two mixed and sank. The northern limit of the cold water would be a region where changes were taking place in the physical and chemical properties of the surface water, and would also be a region where changes in meteorological conditions occurred.

Thus an unusually strong outflow of water from the Antarctic must be associated with unusual meteorological conditions, which would ultimately affect the climate of countries bordering the Southern Ocean. This was of special importance to the shipping of Tasmania and Macquarie Island.

"Though we have accumulated a vast amount of data, there is much yet to be done," he added. "But it is not difficult to look into the future to the time when permanent research stations, established in the Antarctic and sub-Antarctic, will enable the forecasting of climatic conditions and the migrations of fish and whales."

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