

THE ARRIVAL OF THE AURORA

DR. MAWSON BECOMES "OYSTER"

HAS SOLD HIS STORY TO LONDON PAPER

COURTESIES IN THE ROADSTEAD.

All sorts of rumors commence to circulate when people are taken aback. We had an instance of this on Wednesday night. The sudden news of the Aurora being in sight of Cape Borda caused it to be said that the vessel would arrive at the Semaphore anchorage about 6 a.m. on Thursday. Now the Aurora can do only about seven knots per hour at her very best, and it is evident that few took into consideration the fact that she would be doing far from her best on the run up the coast. In the first place she would not be too well stocked with coal and would have to economise. Secondly, her three months' sojourn in the Antarctic would be responsible for a fine collection of marine growths on her keel and sides, and this would take at least a knot off her speed. Taking everything into consideration, therefore, the Aurora would have been doing remarkably well to knock out six knots per hour. As a matter of fact she did only about five, except when sail was hoisted and advantage taken of a spanking sou-westerly breeze to get a bit of a kick up the gulf.

Representatives of "The Daily Herald" lost no time in locating themselves at the Semaphore. All Wednesday night two of them kept watch and ward at the signal station, braving the chilly atmosphere, and thankful indeed for the steaming cups of tea brewed by a sympathetic signalman. Nothing was seen of the Aurora, but it was a fine opportunity of viewing "ships that passed in the night." Day broke over a sea like glass with not a sign on the horizon to indicate where the Antarctic vessel might be trudging along. Then Captain Richardson, the pilot-in-charge, happened along and his dictum was that the Aurora would be doing very well indeed if she made the roadstead by noon. Just to make sure a run out in the gulf on board the launch Premier was undertaken, and on the way Pilot Henderson was picked up from the Mashona, which vessel he had taken out to an anchorage.

Eight o'clock came, and with it breakfast for the reporters. Then 10 a.m., and the news that the Aurora had passed Cape Troubridge and might be expected to come into sight about 2 p.m. those shrewd judges of time and place, the pilots, were not far wrong as it happened, for at 2:15 p.m. a black smudge appeared on the distant skyline and the powerful telescope in the lookout station made it out to be the long-looked-for Aurora. Half an hour later the smudge had become a big black dot, which grew larger and larger as one watched it. It was the Aurora right enough. At 3:15 p.m. she had materialised out of the hazy distance and appeared to be making good headway with a favorable breeze and following sea. A little while afterwards, when the distance had decreased sufficiently for her lines to be discerned, it could be seen that Captain Davis had not relied upon steam power alone, but had caused a foretopmast to be set, and this was adding at least a couple of knots to the little ship's register.

At the end of the Semaphore Jetty there was considerable bustle. Three steam launches were puffing away in readiness to cart off and hurry out to meet the newcomer. On board the steamer Conqueror were Captain Richardson, Messrs. C. R. Hodge (Registrar of the University, representing the Chancellor (Sir Samuel Way), F. A. Robertson (Dr. Mawson's cadet at the University), Richard Correll (father of Mr. P. E. Correll, a member of the expedition), T. Ryan (who is a close personal friend of Mr. Mawson), and several friends

board the Aurora must surely have remarked to themselves the wonderful contrast between the South Australian summer day and the gloom of the Antarctic night from which they had just passed. It was an afternoon of blue and gold. Certainly Nature did her part in welcoming the explorers. The Aurora bowed gracefully to the craft surrounding her, dipping her nose into the brine of South Australian waters, and throwing cascades of glittering drops back from the heavily sheathed bow and wave-worn sides. On the poop the members of the party congregated and discussed a number of remarkably fine tomatoes which Captain Anderson, who was acting as pilot to the Aurora, had picked that morning in his own garden and taken aboard. The voyagers ate the rich red spheres with a zest that told of a long abstinence from anything so palatable. All the time greetings were being exchanged with the passengers on the accompanying launches, and not a little chaff was hurled at the explorers because of the generous proportions some of them have attained since last they were seen in Adelaide. In several cases it was apparent that the period of separation between the man and his Sunday apparel had been a long one. Straining seams and sleeves and trouserlegs that had grown too short evidenced the fact that men do not shrink in the Antarctic. Nor did one have to cast more than a cursory glance to see that each and every one was in the pink of condition. They looked more like a party of young fellows who had been on a holiday jaunt rather than daring adventurers who had braved the perils of icebound seas, frostbite, starvation, and treacherous crevasses for a couple of years past.

Everybody was looking out for the leader, Dr. Mawson, and he did not keep them waiting long. A lithe athletic figure, clad in a Norfolk suit and white flannel trousers, sprang up the ladder leading to the bridge, and waved his hand to his welcoming friends. It was the doctor, and he looked as well, if not better, than he did when he started on his expedition in 1911. He seemed to be very busy. Running down from the bridge, he went and spoke to his comrades assembled aft. The nature of that little confab was learned by the pressmen a little later, when a difficulty in obtaining interviews became apparent.

By this time pratique had been granted, and the reporters had climbed the Aurora's side. A beeline was made for Dr. Mawson, and, my, what a work of art it was to catch him. A determined sally prevented his retreat over the side of the vessel and into the Customs launch, and, suitcase in hand, he paused and smilingly faced his pursuers.

"Say, doctor—"

But the reporter got no further.

"I'm sorry, boys, but really you can't interview me now."

"Why, doctor? Have you sold your story?"

"Yes, that's it."

"And it's exclusive."

"It is. But see me this evening at the South Australian. I might have something to tell you then." And, without further ado, the doctor closed the conversation by nimbly shinning over into the waiting launch.

The Aurora steamed off towards Port Adelaide. As she did the tramp steamer Prophet, outward bound, passed her, and there was an exchange of nautical courtesies such as the dipping of the flag, blast on the whistles, and so forth.

The ships in the roadstead also saluted the Aurora, and the latter returned the compliment.

Dr. Mawson's landing has already been referred to. He was met at the jetty steps by the Hon. John Lewis, M.L.C., president of the Royal Society, Mr. A. W. Piper, K.C., a member of the Antarctic branch on the Royal Geographical Society, and Mr. H. P. Moore, one of the vice-presidents. Mr. Lewis sent Mr. Mawson a wire early yesterday morning welcoming him to South Australia, and on meeting the doctor again extended very cordial greetings. Dr. Mawson said he was very grateful for the expressions of welcome, and thanked Mr. Lewis for his telegraphic message.

and relatives of various members of the party. The Ethel carried a number of press representatives, and on board the Commonwealth's launch were the port health officer (Dr. Gething) and the Customs officials. The Conqueror was the first to put off when the Aurora was about six or seven miles out at sea, and by the time the other vessels got within hailing distance of the stranger the local boat had snuggled herself up alongside, and the Aurora, with the air of an old friend, was leaning over slightly towards her smaller consort as though whispering to her some of those strange secrets which a long stay in the seas of ice had stored within the stout timbers.

It was a glorious day, and those on



DR. DOUGLAS MAWSON.