

mur was raised by them, though they felt keenly the disappointment of being kept in their ice prison for another year. Madigan had doubts whether his scholarship will be kept open another year. No man was more admirably fitted to be a leader. All were physically strong and hardened by long sledging, and provided with plenty of food and coal from the ship. The relief party steamed out of Commonwealth Bay with sad hearts on February 8. To our consternation the ship was turned again towards the main base. It appeared that a wireless message had been received from the main base, reading—"Returned main base safely. Ninnes and Mertz dead. Return and pick up shore party immediately.—Signed Mawson." The Aurora returned to Commonwealth Bay next morning, but a strong hurricane prevented communication between the land

and the ship. A flagged message, "send instructions," was observed by the shore party, but no attempt was made to reply either by wireless or flags. The same evening the hurricane increased with such intensity that the Aurora, anchorless, could not keep her ground. Captain Davis called us together in the messroom, and explained the situation regarding Wild's base. He said the delay was jeopardising their lives. A glance at the captain showed that the responsibility weighed heavily on him. He looked positively haggard; all sympathised with him, knowing the terrible strain he endured. They unanimously supported his decision to start immediately for Wild's base, leaving Dr. Mawson and the relief party to be brought back next year.

The Aurora steaming from the Semaphore towards the Port River.

