THE CALL OF DUTY.

Rhodes Scholar at the Pole.

Why Madigan Stayed Behind.

The Chancellor of the Adelaide University (Right Hon. Sir S. J. Way, Bart.) has received the following letter from Mr. C. T. Madigan, a member of the Masonson expedition to the Antarctic. Mr. Madigan was chosen as Rhodes Scholar for 1911, but was granted two years' suspension to enable him to join the expedition. The letter is dated "8. Y. Aurora, Commonwealth Bay, Adelaide Land, January 31, 1912," and is as follows:

—Leader of the Relief.—

"Owing to the non-return of Dr. Masonson and his party from the summer reconnaissance the necessity is felt for their safety, and it has become necessary to leave a party down there at the main base to secure them for us. Captain J. H. Davie, Commander of the Aurora, and second in command of the expedition, has assumed command. He has gone down about 1,500 miles west along the coast near Gansbier, and there are in a difficult place, hemmed in by pack ice and bergs, and their relief becomes daily more hazardous. Dr. Masonson is 16 days overdue on January 31, and I have been informed that in the event of his non-return the ship will leave here on February 1, which is later than the season they had hoped for. I will do my best, as captain and all concerned are, of course, anxious that the very best should be done for them. I have been informed that Dr. Masonson's party is 40 strong, and that best is considered to be that I remain here as leader of the relief. Six men are necessary to form two scientific parties, and continue work at the hut, and in addition, Jeffries, the man who relieves Hanan at the wireless, is not yet been chosen, and asked to remain. Nile has refused this duty, difficult though the task is, and we are not long Antarctic winter, especially in this country. I feel that I am losing much by staying here another year, but I must do it, at all costs, and I will do my best. I will lose my scholarship, but I want to make it clear that it is no light matter to me, probably with Government, or not even in winter in the polar regions can fully understand the anxiety to return, and, in my case, the anxiety to stay.

"It is Unavoidable."

"It is most unfortunate that after the Rhodes trustees have been good enough to give me two years' extension I should not even then turn up. I fear they will think I have not valued the scholarship. It is unavoidable. I am sure you will realize the situation I was in when requested by Capt. Davie to join the relief. No one wished to stay, several even spoke of refusing, and was I to leave the way in which the relief had to be formed it was necessary to ask for a further postponement of the date of my going to Oxford, but even then there would be necessity to Mr. Wylie, asking him what he can do. Knowing, as I do, that you are interested in me, I will not blame you under these circumstances, I would beg you to write for me to the Rhodes trustees, perhaps through the selection committee, but you will regret the selection of 1910. I am asking you further explaining my position. The ship will be down early for us again next summer, probably with Government support, and we will be back in Australia early in February with any luck. I could go into the fluffing of the summer term, if allowed, and stay during the long vacation, and thus not lose much time.

—Work of the Summer.—

"You will hear of my experiences down here. We have discovered the windiest place on earth—one continuous hurricane, reaching 60 to 100 miles per hour for hours on end. We experienced three fine days in as many months during the winter, but our 16 weeks of sledging was in moderate weather. The year's average wind velocity runs out at 49 miles per hour. We got through a good deal of scientific work during the winter—biological, bacteriological, physical, meteorological, and magnetic. There were four parties for the summer: Dr. Masonson over the plateau to the east to attempt to reach the land last seen sighted by the Terra Nova on her first return voyage in 1911, 500 miles away; he took all the dog and 10 weeks' provisions. Bayside's party inland; Bickerton's western coastal party, starting with the aeroplane motor sledge; and my eastern coastal party. The southern party got 500 miles inland over a monotonous plateau; Bickerton got 150 miles west over the Barrier, made a journey of 200 miles along the coast opposite the sea ice, discovering many rocky bluffs and several mountains and a glacier 16 miles long; he took all the corroboration of magnetic dip and declination, meteorological observations, geological and other data. I followed the outline of the coast on the sea ice. My knowing this cot is a strong argument for remaining behind, and I must say I took some convincing that I was the man to stay when nine were returning. Except for the delay of Dr. Masonson's return and the wet weather, which has been very successful here, the main base. All may yet be well with them. They may have gone too far west, locating and striking heavy weather, be delayed on the man-hauling return, or one of them may be ill or injured, which would greatly impede them. We still have hope for them. I could write volumes on our experiences here. It is hard to know when to stop. I have been tremendously busy the last week getting provisions and coal from the ship and organizing them, repairing the hut, preparing for sledging and the winter. I will leave winter quarters in a month's sledging or as long as weather permits, as soon as the ship leaves."