

ANTARCTIC MORTALITY.

NEWS FROM MAWSON EXPEDITION.

DEATH OF TWO MEMBERS.

WIRELESS MESSAGES RECEIVED.

SUCCESSFUL RESULTS BY THE PARTY.

News that death has robbed the Mawson Antarctic Expedition of two of its members will be received with profound regret not only in Australia, but throughout the rest of the civilized world. Following so closely upon the lamentable disaster which befell Capt. Scott and four others of his party, the blow to the Australian expedition comes with accentuated force. The long awaited announcement of the fact that Dr. Mawson's Adelie Land base had got into wireless communication with Macquarie Island, and thus again into touch with the outside world, was conveyed in a telegram published in The Register on Tuesday, and it was then expected, according to Hobart advices, that messages from Dr. Mawson would be available so soon as the conditions proved favourable.

The next intelligence received was that two wireless messages from Macquarie Island had reached Professor David, of Sydney (Chairman of the Australian managing board of the expedition), who was a prominent member with Sir Ernest Shackleton's party. The first of them, which came to hand on Tuesday morning, was apparently unfinished. It stated:—

Wireless again working. Dr. Mawson and several men missed the Aurora, owing to unfortunate circumstances. We are now endeavouring to receive a long message from Dr. Mawson. The conditions are very bad. We are keeping you posted.

The second of the messages was received by Professor David on Tuesday afternoon. It stated:—

Lieut. Ninnis and Dr. Mertz are both dead. All the others are well. Dr. Mawson and six others will probably winter at Adelie. They have been very successful in sledging.

(Signed) SAWYER, officer in charge at Macquarie Island.

Message to Lord Denman.

MELBOURNE, February 25.

The Governor-General (Lord Denman) this morning received the following wireless message:—

Winter Quarters, Australian Antarctica, via Macquarie Island and Radio, Hobart. To His Excellency Lord Denman, Melbourne.

The sledging season has been successful in opening up a large area of new land east and west of Commonwealth Bay, and in obtaining important data at a number of stations in close proximity to the magnetic pole. It is probable that six of the staff

and myself will be unavoidably detained here for another year. Unfortunately Lieut. Ninnis and Dr. Mertz both lost their lives. All the others are alive and well.

(Signed) MAWSON.

Another message received by His Excellency stated:—

Please communicate the following message to His Majesty the King:—As leader of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition, now operating in Antarctica, I take this opportunity of the first regular wireless communication between our main Antarctica base and other parts of your Majesty's dominions, to request permission to name a large area of newly discovered land, "King George V. Land." This lies between Victoria Land and Adelie Land, and our main sleighing efforts have been concentrated upon it.

DOUGLAS MAWSON.

Lord Denman sent the following reply:—

Very many thanks for your message, which I will communicate at once to His Majesty. I am indeed glad to receive such a good account of your expedition and of the excellent work you have performed, although I deeply deplore the loss of two of your gallant comrades. I trust that you and those who are staying with you will successfully weather the perils and privations of another winter in the antarctic.

The Deceased Members.

The late Lieut. Ninnis was a member of the Royal Fusiliers, and had made a special study of surveying. He accompanied the party as a sledger. The late Dr. Mertz was a Swiss by birth, and was an expert in ice matters. Among his other attainments he was a fine exponent of skiing, and had held the ski jump championship of Switzerland in connection with that picturesque sport.

Dr. Mawson's Narrow Escape.

It is interesting to recall that while accompanying Sir Ernest Shackleton's expedition Dr. Mawson himself had a narrow escape from losing his life. With other comrades he had been awaiting the arrival of the Nimrod to start upon the homeward journey, and on the appearance of the vessel, during an enthusiastic rush toward her, he fell down a gloomy ice crevasse 20 ft. deep. Fortunately the mishap was noticed by Professor David and Mr. Mackay, who with some of the sailors hauled him out by means of ropes. If the fall had not been observed it is almost certain that Dr. Mawson would have

Personnel of the Party.

The trip to Antarctica was begun at the end of 1911, in the Aurora. Apart from the officers and crew of the vessel, who numbered about 25, there was a land board staff of 32 men, including Dr. Mawson. In addition, Mr. C. C. Eitel, a son of the late Dr. Eitel, of Adelaide, was stationed at Hobart as Secretary, in charge of general matters connected with the expedition, and to deal more particularly with wireless messages coming from the party. The men selected by Dr. Mawson were:—From South Australia—Messrs. C. T. Madigan (Rhodes Scholar for 1910, who was granted permission by the Oxford University accompany the expedition), M. H. Moyes, A. L. Kennedy, P. E. Correll, and A. J. Hodgeman. Victoria—Messrs. H. D. Murphy, F. H. Stillwell, O. A. Hoodley, and G. F. Ainsworth, and Lieut. R. Page. Tasmania—Mr. Harrison. New South Wales—Messrs. J. Hunter, A. D. Watson, C. F. Laceron, W. H. Hannam, C. F. Hurley, and J. H. Close, and Drs. A. L. McLean and S. E. Jones. New Zealand—Messrs. S. Webb, H. Hamilton, and Sawyer, and Dr. L. H. Whetter. Europe—Messrs. C. A. Sandall and F. Bickerton, Lieut. Ninnis, and Dr. F. Mertz.

Leader of the Party.

Dr. Douglas Mawson was born at Bradford, Yorkshire, in 1882. He was educated at Sydney University, and graduated as a Bachelor of Mining Engineering in 1901. He was a demonstrator of chemistry at the Sydney University in 1902, and in the following year undertook geological exploration in the New Hebrides Islands. In

