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 Cape 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 then 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 authorities, that messages from Dr. Mawson would be available soon as 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 unfavourable. 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—

"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 Davenport.

MELBOURNE, February 25.

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

Winter Quarters, Australian Antarctic
via Macquarie Island and Hobart:
To His Excellency Lord Davenport, Melbourne:

The sledding season has been successful in opening up a large area of new land east and west of Common Wealth 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 Lord, Nimick and Dr. McMurdo both find their ways. 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 Australian Antarctic Expedition, now operating in Antarctica, I take this opportunity of the first regular wireless communication between our main Antarctic 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 sledging efforts have been concentrated in it.

DOUGLAS MAWSON.

Lord Davenport sent the following reply:

"Very many thanks for your message, which I will communicate as soon 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 terrific storms which sometimes visit this part of the winter in the Antarctic."

The Deceased Members.

The late Ernest Nimick was a member of the Royal Australasian Expedition in 1911. He had made a special study of surveysing. He accompanied the party as a sledger. The late Dr. McMurdo was a Swiss by birth, and was an expert in ice matters. Amongst his other attainments he was a fine exponent of shooting and had held the ski jump championship of Switzerland in connection with that pastime apart.

Dr. Mawson's Narrow Escape.

It is interesting to note 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 watching the arrival of the Nimick to start upon the journey and during an embankment rush towards the Nimick, he fell down a gully for a distance of 20 ft. deep. Professor David and Mr. Mackay, who with some of the sailors landed him out of the gully, saw him afterwards and they saw that he had broken no bones.

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 28, there was a land board staff of 33 men, including Dr. Mawson. In addition, Mr. C. C. Edie, a star of the late Dr. Edie, 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. G. F. Mackay (Riordan School for 1910), who was given permission by the Oxford University to accompany the expedition), M. H. Moore, A. L. Kennedy, P. E. Curnell, and J. A. Hodgman.


Leader of the Party.

Dr. Douglas Mawson was born at Bathford, Yorkshire, in 1885. He was educated at Sydney University, and graduated as a Bachelor of Mining Engineering in 1907. 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