ANTARCTIC PERILS.

Sad and stern lessons are conveyed by the report of the Marconi expedition brought to Hobart by the explorers who have returned to the Adora. Climatic conditions in Australia are usually so genial and pleasant that some people, in their ignorance, imagined that the "tip south" would partake of the nature of a picnic. Since, then, five members of the British Antarctic Expedition, including its gallant leader, Capt. R. F. Scott, perished in a blizzard while returning from the South Pole, and two members of the Australian Expedition lost their lives, one by falling down a crevasse and the other from malnutrition, these mournful tragedies show that, in some respects, as provided with the most modern equipment and having the benefit of the experiences of earlier navigators and explorers, Dr. Mawson has undertaken exceedingly hazardous tasks. The pleasure of welcoming home the majority of his party after their year's sojourn in the land of perpetual ice, is, therefore, attended with anxiety regarding the welfare of Dr. Mawson and his six companions, who were not expected to stay 22 months longer in the Commonwealth Bay, Adelie Land, Capt. Davis has explained why the Aurora failed to pick up the little party at the main base. He adopted the only course which appeared to him prudent, and, having taken on board, with the party, returned to Hobart. He was in a most trying situation, and his conduct apparently meets with the approval of all the brave men who came back with him. In the circumstances, however, despite extraordinary criticism passed upon the leader by the Secretary of the expedition, it is difficult to know that the climate of Adelie Land is "pathologic" in any place on earth, that "the average wind velocity for the complete year has been 50 miles an hour," and that Dr. Mawson has lost two of his companions, and himself narrowly escaped death. Severe trials must be undergone during the long Antarctic nights, and the explorers will need a large stock of provisions and clothing as well as a strong and well-built hut, to enable them to keep in good health. The latest wireless news from Dr. Mawson is cheering, and indicates that he and his companions are in good health, the idea of spending another year at the base. As the wireless apparatus shall remain in working order, the public will have the satisfaction of learning at intervals how the party is faring. At present there is no reason why we should not hope for the best.

EDUCATION IN ENGLAND.

Interest in the political aspects of the education question in England has greatly increased during the past few months. This increase is partly due to the fact that a powerful body of opinion considers the time ripe for another legislative attempt to settle the religious question, and partly because of the irony of education and land reform in the same year. The League of Kings is of special concern for immediate consideration. A few days ago it was announced that the League of Kings has decided to open Parliament that a measure to establish a national system of education would be considered in the first Session of the Second Chamber. The King's Commission, which was not at present to carry the large scheme proposed through all its legislative stages, To-day the King's Commission is now in session, and a speech delivered at St Andrews by Mr. President of the Board of Education, gives a broader outline of the scope of the measure, which will be brought before the House. England is pressed "a national system, graded from the cradle to the University," and anything that makes the expression of the word "national" implies a revolutionary departure from the existing arrangements. Information and rating is set aside by an explicit declaration that the Government do not propose to "continue the principle of making the local authorities responsible for the maintenance of schools accepted by the Government," that there will be an extension of power, pre-school education is not to be a means of establishing a system of continuation schools and industrial training. Secular education is to be as far as possible as the advocates of Scripture, and whatever will certainly be disapproved at the. Poor Commission's examination will be no attempt to disregard the religious difficulty, which, for its own part, it regards as incapable of settlement. Therefore, no decision on solution or compromise is embodied in the law. If the Government cannot produce an answer, a court of law is to be charged with using public revenue to support the religious teaching of a single creed. There is no provision to provide for a purely secular plan when the law is altered, as sooner or later it surely will be. But this is no mere technical or a lame and inept conclusion. In combination with the religious question as insoluble. It may be said that in this case there is no more a solution to install a secular "endowmentless secular system" on which Nonconformists may agree, but which, the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches object to as unstable and ineffective, and than it is to use the whole of its power for the maintenance of distinguished Church schools.