

16 AUG 1932



The University of Adelaide

Adelaide

12th August, 1932.

The Hon. D. H. Drummond, M.L.A.;

Dear Sir,

Yesterday I posted to you an extended communication relative to the printing of the reports of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition 1911-14, but it has occurred to me that as Antarctic exploration probably does not come within the ambit of your busy life, it may be that you have not fully realised the great importance of the work achieved by our Expedition and the consequent outstanding value of reports relating to that achievement.

To give some idea of the outstanding character of our Australasian Antarctic Expedition, I cannot do better than enclose a copy of extracts from Gordon Hayes' recently published book "Antarctica." This book is a critical survey of Antarctic expeditions to the date of publication of the work.

I may also add for your information that it took well over 20 years to complete the publications of the "Challenger" Expedition, notwithstanding the fact that they had at their disposal almost unlimited funds. It is only recently that the final number has appeared of the less extensive series of reports of the Scott Expedition, which preceded our own and which was also favoured with an abundance of funds. The last of the reports of Amundsen's "Gjoa" Expedition has only recently appeared, some 25 years after the work was undertaken.

Hoping that these facts will be of interest,

Yours faithfully,

Douglas Mawson

Encs.



EXTRACTS FROM "ANTARCTICA",

by J. Gordon Hayes.

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Page 210:-

"Establishment of the Stations: - Sir Douglas Mawson's Expedition, judged by the magnitude both of its scale and of its achievements, was the greatest and most consummate expedition that ever sailed for Antarctica. The expeditions of Scott and of Shackleton were great, and Amundsen's venture was the finest Polar reconnaissance ever made; but each of these must yield the premier position, when fairly compared with Mawson's magnificently conceived and executed scheme of exploration."

Page 229:-

"Critical Remarks: - There is very little scope for fair criticism when an expedition nearly realizes the ideal; but the object of these notes may be achieved as fully by commendation, when it is due, as by the less pleasing, though not less necessary, duty of pointing out defects. Sir Douglas Mawson's Expedition may be held up, like the British Constitution in the eighteenth century, as a model for others to copy.

"Its excellence lay in its design, its scope and its executive success; and it owes its exalted position among other Antarctic expeditions mainly to the fact that it was originated and conducted by scientists of administrative ability, who are the fit and proper persons for such undertakings. Reason appears to have ruled throughout; and as reason alone can judge, the mind naturally finds greater satisfaction where the application of means to end, as well as the whole conception, appears more perfect. It is seldom that one has the pleasure of bestowing such unstinted praise upon an expedition, but it must not be withheld when it is so richly deserved."