

ANTARCTIC DAYS;
Sketches of the homely side of Polar life
by two of Shackleton's men.
Illustrated by the Authors,
JAMES MURRAY and GEORGE MARSTON
(London: Andrew Melrose, 1913)
[Note: The illustrations have been omitted.]

CHAPTER IX

THE SHORE PARTY'S MAGAZINE: THE "AURORA AUSTRALIS"

THE *Aurora Australis* was printed and produced in the Antarctic, during the long dark night. It is a work which has a very limited circulation, as the issue was of necessity very restricted, and did not, I believe, exceed a hundred copies.

Those who have been privileged to see this rare work would little suspect that it was produced by amateur printers. Everything—typography, imposition (or whatever it is called), lithography, etching, is of the highest degree of technical excellence.

You would not imagine that such work could be put out by three men who only had a few hours of instruction, wedged in among the myriad engagements of the exciting days of preparation for an expedition I

Joyce and Wild are responsible for the typography; Marston devised, drew, etched, lithographed, and printed all the illustrations in the book, including the coloured title-page. Sir Joseph Causton very generously provided all the materials—type, paper, printing presses—and had our printers instructed at his Works.

Day, without any instruction at all, set his deft fingers to work and made the covers out of our empty venesta packing cases. Many of the covers still bear conspicuously the stencilled brand telling the nature of the contents, such as SUET, BACON, etc.

The reader, contemplating the finished work, would have no glimmering of suspicion of the immense difficulties under which the work had to be

produced.

It was winter, and dark, and cold. The work had to be done, in the intervals of more serious occupations, in a small room occupied by fifteen men, all of them following their own avocations, with whatever of noise, vibration and dirt might be incidental to them.

The inevitable state of such a hut, after doing all possible for cleanliness, can be imagined. Fifteen men shut up together, say during a blizzard which lasts a week. Nobody goes out unless on business; everybody who goes out brings in snow on his feet and clothes. Seal-blubber is burned, mixed with coal, for economy. The blubber melts and runs out on the floor; the ordinary unsweepable soil of the place is a rich compost of all filth, cemented with blubber, more nearly resembling the soil of a whaling station than anything else I know.

Dust from the stove fills the air and settles on the paper as it is being printed. If anything, falls on the floor it is done for; if somebody jogs the compositor's elbow as he is setting up matter, and upsets the type into the mire, I can only leave the reader to imagine the result.

The temperature varies; it is too cold to keep the printer's ink fluid; it gets sticky, and freezes. To cope with this a candle was set burning underneath the plate on which the ink was. This was all right, but it made the ink too fluid, and the temperature had to be regulated by moving the candle about.

Once the printers were called away while the candle was burning, and nobody happened to notice it. When they returned they found that the plate had overheated and had melted the inking roller of gelatinous substance. I believe it was the only one on the Continent and had to be recast somehow.

So much for the ordinary printing. The lithography was still worse. All the evils enumerated above persecuted the lithographer, and he had others all to himself. The more delicate part of his work could not be done when the hut was in full activity, with vibration, noise and settling smuts, so Marston used to do most of his printing in the early hours of the morning, when the hut was as nearly quiet and free from vibration as it ever became, and there was a minimum of dust (at least in suspension in the air).

I had the opportunity of observing his tribulations, as, for similar reasons, I found the early hours best for biological study. At these hours the number of loafers round the stove (drinking tea) might be reduced to three or four, or even fewer.

I do not pretend to know the nature of the special difficulties that the climate introduced into lithography, but I know this, that I've frequently seen Marston do everything right—clean, ink, and press—but for some

obscure reason the prints did not come right. And I've seen him during a whole night pull off half a dozen wrong ones for one good print, and he did not use so much language over it as might have been expected.

Thus was this Magazine produced. The matter contributed to the *Aurora* (I had almost forgotten to mention it, so it is obviously a matter of secondary importance) was, I think I may venture to say, on the whole worthy of the printing.

In order to give a wider circulation to some of this work produced in the Antarctic, I have here reproduced several of the best articles and illustrations, at the request of the Editor of the *Aurora Australis*, Sir Ernest Shackleton.

EREBUS

Keeper of the Southern Gateway, grim, rugged,
gloomy and grand;
Warden of these wastes uncharted, as the years
sweep on, you stand.
At your head the swinging smoke-cloud; at your
feet the grinding floes;
Backed and seared by the inner fires, gripped close
by the outer snows.
Proud, unconquered and unyielding, whilst the
untold æons passed,
Inviolatè through the ages, your ramparts spurning
the blast,
Till men impelled by a strong desire, broke through
your icy bars;
Fierce was the fight to gain that height where your
stern peak dares the stars.
You called your vassals to aid you, and the leaping,
blizzard rose,
Driving in furious eddies, blinding, stifling, cruel
snows.
The grasp of the numbing frost clutched hard at their
hands and faces,
And the weird gloom made darker still dim seen
perilous places.
They, weary, wayworn, and sleepless, through the

long, withering night,
Grimly clung to your iron sides till with laggard
Dawn came the light:
Both heart and brain upheld them, till the long-
drawn strain was o'er,
Victors then on your crown they stood and gazed at
the Western Shore;
The distant glory of that land in broad splendour lay
unrolled,
With icefield, cape, and mountain height, flame rose
in a sea of gold.
Oh! Herald of returning Suns to the waiting lands
below;
Beacon to their home-seeking feet, far across the
Southern snow.
In the Northland in the years to be, pale Winter's
first white sign
Will turn again their thoughts to thee, and the
glamour that is thine.

Nemo (E. H. S.).

AN INTERVIEW WITH AN EMPEROR

It was a perfect Antarctic winter night. A — and I were trudging merrily along over the sea-ice, under the cliffs to the north of Erebus, for in such weather it seemed a crime to remain indoors.

The moon shone full, dimming the stars and paling the sky in the zenith, though round the horizon its colour deepened into a rich ultramarine. On our right towered the mighty volcano, swelling up at first in long glittering snow slopes, which formed a noble pedestal to the beetling rocky spurs which buttressed the summit cone and ice-cap.

From the active crater jetted a delicate pure white stream of curling vapour, clear-cut against the sky, like a cameo tracery. It was a scene in whites and blues, only relieved by the rich brown of the rocks.

But such whites and blues! They were livid, ethereal, electric. Artists speak, I believe, of a dead white, but such an adjective could never be applied to the whites of the Antarctic snows by moonlight.

It would be a platitude to compare the whole to a vista of fairyland, and perhaps an anti-climax to say that it was like some lovely transformation

scene, viewed by the wrapt gaze of childhood.

One thing is certain, that the whole effect seemed almost supernatural, and it did not require an impressionable mind to be uplifted by it to a height almost more than mortal.

So we swung along; it seemed as if fatigue were one of those earthly ills left far behind us in prosaic temperate climes.

The creaking snow, blown down and packed hard by the southerly blizzard from the slopes above us, made the most perfect going. The ever-changing views of the broken ice-cliffs and mountain slopes drew us on. We felt as if we could have gone on for a week.

Yet it was strange, and almost uncanny to think that in all the miles and miles of land over which our eyes ranged there was not one living, breathing creature—no, not one!

The Adélie Penguins, those cheery summer visitors; had gone far north with the sun, ten degrees below the horizon. The seals were away out on the edge of the sea ice, and that was farther away, at any rate, than we could see.

True, the Emperors, most majestic of living birds, are said to conduct their royal accouchements in this region in July, that is, the depth of our winter, and it was June as yet.

But we were going in the direction of the Emperors' rookery at Cape Crozier, and in this wonderland anything might happen.

Trudge, trudge, trudge we went, saying very little.

It was no time for conversation. Those who don't know what a polar climate is like, might think we felt cold, but no such discomfort dashed our elated spirits.

This goodly portion of the Earth's fair surface was ours. No polluting foot save ours defaced its virgin solitudes. We might fare where we list; none could say us nay.

No "TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED," here.

No "PRIVATE GROUNDS, NO THOROUGHFARE."

No uniformed park-ranger, or corduroyed gamekeeper could bar our way, with horrid threats, and perhaps still more horrid action.

But stay!—What form is that emerging from the shade of yonder iceberg? It strides towards us with swinging gait, recalling to my mind unpleasant memories of my bird-nesting days.

I cannot control a strange flutter of apprehension in the slack of my trousers, a sort of prophetic sensation of tenderness behind.

That is strangely like a knotted cudgel carried, with ill-concealed menace, under the left arm. "No Gamekeepers," did I say? It must be a gamekeeper.

But he is upon us. All doubt is banished. He is the most enormous

Emperor Penguin I have ever met. Full six feet high, and broad quite out of proportion, his appearance is so extraordinary that I must describe it minutely.

The large, angry eyes, glaring from beneath a close-fitting cap, drawn down over the ears, flank a prodigious black bill, a foot long and curved like a scythe-blade. He wears a black velveteen coat with long skirts, and underneath this a white moleskin waistcoat with brass buttons, and baggy trousers of the same colour. The delicate creamy tinge which I have observed on the throats of common Emperors is developed into a gorgeous red and gold collar or stock. Under his arm, or flipper, he carries a heavy truncheon, fashioned from the backbone of a seal. As he stood before us, all this could be taken in at a glance.

I have had many a painful interview with gamekeepers, and people of that kidney, but this one would take all my diplomacy to meet. But a bland smile and a voluble tongue might pull us through.

“If you please, gamekeeper, park-officer, I mean,” I began:—

But he interrupted me in a harsh voice, and with an accent strongly reminiscent of the land of cakes:

“Noo then, you twa,” he cried, “what the deevil are ye daein’ here” Ye ken vara weel this is private property. Let me see what ye hoo got in your pockets.”

When I had first seen him I had instinctively plunged my hands into these receptacles, with the idea of dropping anything of a compromising nature into the nearest ditch. But my fingers came in contact with something of a different nature.

I seldom go for a long walk without that vademecum, universal panacea, and open sesame, a pocket-flask.

I grasped it, and my courage revived. If “wi’ usquebaugh” I could face the deevil, why not an Emperor Penguin? I was in case to jostle a constable.

Our enemy, however, was in an aggressive mood.

We hesitated at the idea of turning out our pockets to this truculent fowl, so he, without more ado, passed his stick over my clothes. It struck my flask with a full sound, At once his worst suspicions were redoubled.

“Come away, noo, oot wi’ it,” he cried. “Yon’s an egg, ye young rascal, if I’m no’ vera much mistaken,”

“Indeed it is not,” I replied, with new-found confidence, “That’s my pocket flask, by the way, have a dram, will you?” For I thought this was the psychical moment for the introduction of this delicate, but at the same time not disagreeable subject.

“Na, na, laddie,” he said, “no’ sae fast as a’ that. I’ll jeest take your

names and addresses and what's your business here."

Now there are many ways of revealing one's identity and asserting one's position on an occasion like this, but there is none so dignified, not to say majestic, as the display of a clean visiting-card. A lightning thought struck me, and plunging my hand into my breast pocket, I produced the required piece of pasteboard, with an austere flourish and a general air of hauteur. True, it was curled up at the corners, and rather soiled with tobacco ash, and, in place of my own august cognomen, it bore that of an enterprising washerwoman, who had sent it on board at our last port of call.

But it fixed our friend the enemy. He scratched his head, looked at it upside down, then backside foremost, and finally pulled off his cap, stuck the card in the lining and replaced the cap on his head.

"Weel, Gentlemen," he said, "I'll jeest show ye aff the estate if ye'll tell me whaur ye come frae, and what's yer beesiness?"

"Well! come now, my man," I replied, "have a dram, and I'm sure we're very sorry to have caused you any trouble."

With that I again brought forth the flask. He took a long gurgling swig, coughed and threw back his head, shutting his eyes and smacking his bill in a way half human, half galline.

"Man, yon's the richt stuff," he murmured, handing it back. "It's gey scarce aboot here."

"And pray," I went on, thinking it well to avoid an answer to his last question, "whose estate do we happen to have trespassed upon? I was not aware that there were any private grounds in this district."

"Oo, jeest Mr. Forsteri, Aptenodytes Forsteri, a cousin o' the M.P., I'm surprised ye didna ken, man! It's a vera auld family."

"No doubt," I replied, "but you see we are strangers here. But does all the ground about here belong to Mr. Forsteri?"

"Oo aye, sir, ye'll see the march burn ahint ye there, by the laich side o' yon big scaur? The Maister's vera parteeklar about this time o' year. Ye see a' the gentry will be comin' for the nestin' in June, and if he was too see ye here then I dinna ken what he would say."

"But we're very inoffensive people, you know. We're geologists, we just go about collecting stones for our own amusement."

"Wha-at, gatherin' stanes, are ye? Ye're surely no' nestin' tae? Ye canna possibly dae it about here. The Maister wouldna hear o' it!"

I should explain that the penguin builds his nest of stones only, so I hastened to explain.

"Oh! no, no," I said, "we merely collect the stones to take home, and show to people who are interested in them."

“Besides,” said A— in a tone of deep melancholy, “we’ve no hens with us.”

“Aye, aye,” he replied, nodding his head thoughtfully, “ye’ll be frae yin o’ they expeditions, are ye no’?”

“Yes,” I said boldly, seeing that the cat must come out of the bag. “We are from the British Antarctic Expedition of 1907.”

“Mphm! are ye though! Ye’re queer folk, man! I often wonder what brings ye here. I mind the last yin that was here, somewhere about seven years syne.

“A pack o’ them cam’ ower tae the rookery, after the maist o’ us was gane. We thought they were sea-leopards at first, and some o’ the weans was gey scared.

“But as far as I ken, they ta’en naething but a wheen auld rotten eggs. What in a’ the world they were gaun tae dae wi’ them is a pairfect meestery tae me.

“The Maister was no at hame at the time, but he was awfu’ vexed when he heard tell o’ it. He said he would ha’e the law o’ them if they ever came again.”

“Well! I hope we will get on better with you,” I said. “We’ll try not to annoy you in anyway.”

I wondered at the time if he would object to being stewed, for we were all growing rather tired of Adélie’s.

All this time we had been walking slowly back towards the hut. I kept hoping that our new acquaintance would leave us, for I dreaded what might happen if we met any of our dogs.

The sight of this majestic bird, pursued by half a dozen yelping curs, tobogganning along on his stomach, and tearing all his brass buttons off on the ice, would have been most painful to me.

But my mind was soon relieved. Our friend stopped and looked round him, squawked thoughtfully, and, extending a flipper to me, he said:—

“Weel! here we are at the march. I’ll just say good-bye tae ye.

“I would advise ye no’ tae come ower here again till the Maister’s gane.

“It’s no’ that I care much mysel’, but he’s vera parteeklar.”

We shook hands with him, and started away for home.

“Quite a civil bird,” I said to A—.

“Yes,” he replied, “and I thought, rather intelligent.” But his voice “far, far away did seem.”

I pinched myself surreptitiously, glanced at my companion and then over my shoulder. Not a sign of our late acquaintance was to be seen, and there was hardly an ice-hummock about that could have concealed.

Was it all a dream, then?
At any rate, we have obeyed his orders.

A PONY WATCH

After watching the man painting the lamp-post with a brush fixed on a breast drill, for some time in silence, I say to the boy with green hair, "I believe I could do it better myself." The brush catches me a blow in the ribs, and the man rushes at me with a chopper in one hand and a hammer in the other, when, realizing that I can fly, I take huge leaps without any effort, a most delightful sensation.

To my horror, I find that though the leaps are high yet they do not carry me far; and on the fourth or fifth the man is waiting for me with the hammer. I give myself up for lost, and come down receiving a fearful blow on the head. A voice says, "Come on, this is your pony watch and it has gone two."

By the dim light of the oil lamp, I see standing by the side of my bunk, a figure clothed in oilskins streaming water. Joyce is sitting on his bunk growling out in a voice hoarse with sleep, "Now then, Chucks, you've been called twice." The first time must have been the paint-brush in the ribs.

I realize that I have to stand my two hours watch in the stables, so struggling out of my blankets, I grope sleepily for the socks I have been sleeping on, in the vain hope of drying them; stepping on the spot where a box should be, I land with a bump on the deck.

Down "Oyster Alley" I am thrown by a roll of the ship. "Sorry," I say to the bunk into which I am thrown, before I notice it is empty. Clutching everywhere, I return to where my clothes should be, only to find that the box has returned, and I stub my toe against it. I don't say "sorry," but make a grab at my trousers and gingerly push one leg into their damp, cold recesses. I wish I had not taken them off, but before I can settle in my mind which would have been the better plan, I am thrown violently against a moving box, and together we roll and slide until the deck is fairly level; then as Joyce runs up the ladder with practised steps, I struggle into the rest of my clothes and follow as best I can.

The watch we are relieving come along muttering; "Rough night, pony still down," and literally dive below. I am deafened by the roaring wind, blinded by the driving spray, but struggle past the black, motionless figure of the helmsman, and get safely under the shelter of the deck house. We seem to be sliding into a gigantic bowl of water; I shudder, but continue to fight my way stableward.

Watching for what I think to be a favourable moment, I release my frantic hold of the motor car stays and dash forward; I am caught by a sea

which fills my boots but does not upset me, then as I walk confidently past the galley, the lee rail is buried under water; I am more than ever convinced that it is a rough night, and long for daylight.

A wild struggle through the stable entrance, and I am greeted by a pained silence from Joyce. The ship is fairly level, but the ponies have obviously had a bad time; one is down, and all efforts to raise it having been useless, we wait for daylight to decide its fate. We stare ahead, listening to the gale screaming overhead, and feel the ship giving sudden plunges as the cable strains at her bows.

The timbers of the stable groan and creak, and we doubt their ability to carry the weight of boats and gear resting on them. Gaining confidence we seat ourselves on a sack of wet bran and fall to talking fitfully; the lamp splutters, goes out, and is lit with difficulty; the ponies snort, stamp, kick, and keep us anxious.

Crash! a sea aboard and the sack on which we are sitting is swept from under us, we are rolled into the smother of sea, mixed up with trusses of hay, sacks of oats, food-boxes, etc. The ponies on the weather side kick frantically, one has his forelegs over the bar; Joyce is up and pushing him back before I can extricate myself from the tangle; when I do, I only hold on to a rope and render what assistance I can.

This is followed by a succession of seas aboard, and we heap curses on the helmsman for letting us fall off our course. Occasionally we are swept off our feet, and can only hold on and do little to soothe the ponies. They suffer continually, and we pity them, hoping for finer weather. The mats are slipping from under their feet, we replace them with difficulty and repeat the performance at intervals.

Another period of comparative calm follows; I volunteer to raid the galley and make some cocoa. Here there is a scene of wild confusion; the floor is flooded, littered with coal, and slippery with grease; after many mishaps, "Scottie" coming along gives valuable assistance.

Crash! a huge sea strikes us, and the ship literally staggers with the weight of it; water pours through the door, roof, and every available crevice; the fire is smothered and the galley fills with steam; another rush of water and I am carried through the door into the scuppers, clinging to everything within reach, then as the water pours off, "Scottie," soaked but quite unconcerned, says he is afraid that there is some sea water in the cocoa, but I abandon the idea of cocoa and rush for the stables.

Joyce is having a rough time, the bulwarks are stove in and we are now constantly awash. The rest of the watch consists of fierce inrushes of water, which terrify the ponies and send every loose article regardless of weight,

swinging about the confined space. The grey dawn at length appearing, we begin to have faith in the coming day.

At four o'clock I go aft, report to the officer on watch, then dive into the fearsome depths of "Oyster Alley"; rouse the watch, and when they are up, tumble into my blankets with a sigh of relief; despite a wild medley of scientific snores, sleeping on until "Rouse and shine, rouse and shine," from Wild brings me out to a welcome breakfast, and I learn with regret that the pony has been shot; and so another day begins. PUTTY.

TRIALS OF A MESSMAN

"Rise and shine! Rise and shine! All hands lash up and stow hammocks! Show a leg there, you're the man of the moment!" followed by a few remarks on my personal appearance and habits, as I try to lie and seem to be asleep, and I awake to the realization that I am "Messman."

Until a few weeks ago I didn't even know what the name meant, except that he was not a man who was expected to make messes, and that unpleasant personal remarks were made to him if he did. Now, however, I have learnt by experience that he is expected to do everything and to do it all at the same time. Finding it impossible to impress on the night-watchman the fact that, having a delicate constitution, I ought not to be expected to turn out with the temperature at 20° Fahr., I gave him my candid opinion of his powers of stoking, and said I was pretty sure that, in a future sphere, he was likely to give dissatisfaction.

Having turned out and donned a fair supply of clothes, I reported myself to my chief, and was told in very concise terms to go to a warmer clime; it afterwards turned out that he expected me to do my duty as messman first, and I laid the table for breakfast.

A meal in the Antarctic is a very different affair from one at home, and a description will come better from the messman than from anyone else, for, as the saying is, "The onlooker sees most of the game," and as far as my experience goes, the messman at a meal is very much in the position of a spectator.

At a quarter to nine he gives the order, "Boats crew," and four men proceed to unslung and let down the table, which between meals is kept slung above our heads, occupying much the same position in our imaginations as the sword did in that of Damocles. I have not liked to walk underneath it since the supports gave way and landed the majority of the tinware on the heads of one or two members of the party.

The table in itself is a curiosity; it is built rather ingeniously of the lids of cases, and in one place a legend informs the diner that the table contains a

theodolite, some ranging poles and other surveying apparatus, while another legend remarks that it is only "To be opened on Christmas Day," etc.

Laying the table is an art in itself. The tastes of all members have to be catered for, and that means that it is necessary to have two or three different kinds of jam, marmalade, honey and golden syrup, dripping and butter. I have seen men spreading chutney on their bread and putting honey in their porridge, and, from the way it has disappeared, I have reason to believe that they take Worcestershire sauce with their fruit.

At nine o'clock I serve the porridge, distributing it about equally between the inside and outside of the bowls, and at five or ten minutes past the company condescend to turn out of bed, and the first thing they do is to find fault with the laying of the table.

On one never-to-be-forgotten occasion I forgot the pepper. Now the menu for the morning was porridge, fruit and preserves; what use anyone I could find for pepper in that breakfast, I do not know, but within ten seconds of their arrival at the table, every other man had asked for it and told his neighbour what he thought of me for not putting it on the table. If it happens to be a fruit day, i.e. a day when for second course fruit takes the place of meat, the next order given is, "Bowls up and lick spoons," there being only about fifteen of each article on the Continent, and the bowls and spoons which have been used for porridge are cleaned in this alfresco way and used for fruit.

For about a quarter of an hour everybody is too busily engaged to be captious, but about the time tea or coffee are being passed round they begin to find their tongues, and I sit down to my breakfast, which is stone-cold, beneath a fire of criticisms as, to my fitness, or rather my lack of fitness, for the post.

After breakfast I wash the crockery and tinnery, being allowed a pint of water and a couple of lumps of soda to do it with. Volunteers have been known to assist in getting the grease off the plates and in drying them, and it is possible to get through the work in about an hour.

It is a sight for the gods to see a well-known F.R.S. drying a wet plate with a wetter cloth, and looking ruefully at the islands of grease remaining, after he has spent five minutes' hard work on it. I suppose that nowhere else in the world is it a common sight to see two geologists and a meteorologist washing up dishes as if they had been used to nothing else.

The above programme is repeated three times in the day, with slight variations at lunch, tea and dinner, and is in itself, in my opinion, sufficient work to last three men and a boy for a week.

The messman also enjoys quite a number of other privileges. He is

allowed to go out into the cold and obtain enough ice to fill both the boiler from which we ourselves drink and the eighteen gallon melting pot which provides the fresh water for the Cavalry Commissariat Department, and he may do this as often as he likes. He is allowed to fetch bags of coal and strips of frozen blubber for the fire, while on Sundays, as a great treat, he may dig out the frozen mutton from the snowdrift on the roof.

With everything apparently united to afford him plenty of employment and make him happy, yet, strange to say; he has his moments of despondency. No other occupation could cause a man to have such a low opinion of his own powers.

To a casual observer stoning raisins appears to be easy enough, and until my first day as messman I had been a very casual observer, and when the autocrat at the head of the Food Department gave me some raisins after lunch, and told me to stone them, I looked forward to a restful interlude in what had so far been a strenuous day. I washed my hands until they were of a colour which I thought could not show on the raisins, even if it did come off, took a tin of raisins and a basin, settled myself in a comfortable position, and started.

At the end of half an hour there were seven whole raisins and forty-nine pieces in the basin, stones scattered all over the hut and myself, raisin in my hair and in everything else within reach, and about two hundred raisins inside various members of the Expedition. There was raisin in everything at dinner, from the soup to the tea, and I meet raisin stones in my bed, on all my clothes, and in all my books.

Last, but not least, I retired from the fray with my respect for all people who make cakes and puddings greatly enhanced. In the words of a prominent scientist on the Expedition, "To a man of my refined and sensitive nature, it is singularly repulsive to be beaten by a fruit."

Another duty new to me is making tea, and it is by no means a light one. The capacity of this Expedition for tea is simply marvellous; some of the members take it in a bath, and among the many things I have learnt is that some Scotchmen take more tea than "whuskie" (though that may be because they can get no "whuskie"), and that they are more particular about it than even Australians. It is either too hot or too cold, boiled too much or not boiled at all, too sweet or not sweet enough, and whether it is good, bad or indifferent, there is never enough of it. Like most other messmen, I have decided now to make it to suit myself, and have ceased to pay any attention to criticism.

I should not like to finish without expressing my gratitude for one thing. To a lover of human nature it is very gratifying to see artists, geologists,

biologists, meteorologists and other “ologists” and “ists,” fighting in vast numbers and with earnest purpose for the privilege of sweeping out the hut after dinner, and relieving the messman of this exercise. I have not liked to thank them to their faces, but thought they might blush unseen when they saw in print my appreciation of their eagerness.