

AN ANTARCTIC WINTER.

DESCRIBED BY EXPLORER WHO
HAD A TASTE OF IT.

The Belgica's Year in the Pack Ice—Drifting 500 Miles to the West—Blasts from the South and Warmer Winds—Fengulus and Seals in the Water.

The Royal Belgian Geographical Society received on April 27 a report from Lieut. de Gerlache, commander of the Belgica expedition, on the year and two months spent in Antarctic waters. The Sun has already printed many facts about the experience of the expedition, but no sufficient data concerning the scientific work of the Belgica have been at hand hitherto to make it possible to prepare a summary of the results of this journey, which extended some distance into the unknown Antarctic area. The following facts deduced and some of them computed from the Lieutenant's report relate entirely to the exploratory work and the hitherto untried Antarctic winter.

Starting on Jan. 14, 1898 from Staten Island, at the southeast end of Terra del Fuego, seven soundings were made as the Belgica crossed the 500 miles of waters to the South Shetland Islands and the greatest depth was attained was 13,251 feet. The comparative shallowness of these waters had previously been ascertained. A wide submarine plateau connects the southern end of the American mainland with the islands visited by the Belgica.

On Jan. 21, a week after leaving South America, the Belgica entered Bransfield Strait, which separates the South Shetland Islands from the larger land masses known as Trinity, Palmer and Graham Lands to the south, and steamed west through the Strait to Low Island. It was while crossing southeast from Low Island to Hughes' Gulf, Palmer Land, that De Gerlache saw what he reports as a possible discovery of land. He says he found a narrow strait separating the 'terres de l'Est' (Trinity Land) from an important archipelago, which he provisionally named the Palmer Archipelago. In view of the visits to these regions of Bellingshausen, Biscoe d'Urville, Dallman and a number of British and American whalers, it is strange if the Belgica has brought to light new land north of and near to the large land mass.

In the three following weeks, Jan. 25 to Feb. 12, about twenty landings were made on the islands of the Palmer Archipelago and the coast on the south side of the narrow strait, and three weeks were very fruitful in collections. The zoologist, Mr. Racovita, discovered specimens of a new kind of podurella and a species of dipterous or two-winged insect, besides many specimens of minute organisms, all representatives of a terrestrial Antarctic fauna hitherto unknown. He also collected mosses, lichens and grasses and made notes on the penguins, cormorants, and many other kinds of birds that were seen in large numbers. Mr. Lecointe determined the geographical position of a number of points. Lieut. Danco determined the magnetic elements wherever he was able to lend his instruments. Dr. Cook of Brooklyn took many photographs of the picturesque coasts, and Lieut. de Gerlache speaks in high terms of the value of this work, which is a fine and faithful representation of the aspects of a part of this coast line, the longest yet known in the South Polar regions except in Victoria Land. Mr. Aretowski collected specimens illustrating the geology.

On the Feb. 12 the Belgica made her way westward into the ocean and turned south. A heavy fog prevailed until the 16th and prevented observations that might otherwise have been among the most interesting of the journey. The Biscoe Islands, extending for some sixty miles southwesterly, were not visible and of course nothing was seen off the west coast of Graham Land, not yet outlined on the maps, though its known to be bordered by mountains. The 16th was bright and sunny, and Alexander I. Land was visible at a distance, but a wide field of ice prevented our approach to it. The fog thus prevented the expedition from solving two interesting problems—the determination of the west coast line of Graham Land and the problem whether Alexander I Land is isolated or is a part of Graham Land. The great desire, however, was to enter the unknown area of the south, and so the Belgica turned to the southwest, skirted the edge of the floe ice and on Feb. 28 in 85° west longitude, attained 70° 20' south latitude. She had passed into the unexplored area, which, between the 80th and 150 meridians, west, is bounded on

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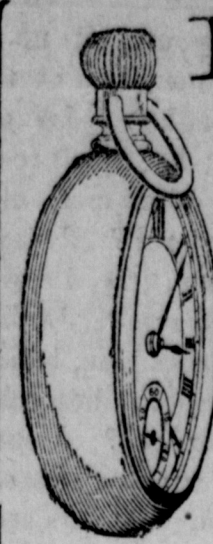
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the north for the most part, by 66th to the 70th parallel. A gale from the northeast had made wide breaches in the floe ice, and the Belgica pushed in, making her way without difficulty to 71° 34' south and 85° 16' west. On March 3 the vessel could not gain another foot south, and so she was put about, and for a week

the prevailing direction was towards the west, and particularly in the summer months of 1898-99. She emerged from at 1° 3' W. or about 480 miles west of the point where she was caught in the pack. She had also been drifting north or south all these months within very narrow limits, the most southern point reached being 71° 36' 8'.

It was invariably remarked that the drift to the south, under the propulsion of the north winds, was as rapid as the drift to the north when southern winds were blowing. This fact, together with the abyssal soundings attained, convinced De Gerlache that if there is an Antarctic continent he was very far from its northern edge on the South American side of the polar area. He does not think that he was near any large land mass to the south.

The sun disappeared on May 17 and rose again sixty-five days later, on July 21. Of course, the winter night in a latitude averaging only about 4° within the Antarctic circle would not be of long duration. The ice was over six feet thick. High gales were frequent, and heavy snow falls, that rendered work outside the ship



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the pack when, under the influence largely of the swell, wide leads finally opened to the north and much of the pack was broken to fragments, though to the south it still appeared to be impenetrable. The Belgica arrived at Punta Arenas in Magellan Strait's, fourteen days after she emerged from the ice.



made seven to eight miles a day to the north in very compact ice.

On March 10 she was frozen in solid, the ice field probably extending sixty to seventy miles north of her. Preparations were at once made for the first winter spent by human beings in the Antarctic regions. Snow was heaped up around the vessel to the height of the bridge, and the bridge was roofed over. Seaweed was kept up till March 26, in view of a possible chance to break out, which did not come. Frozen in on March 10, 1898, the party spent a year in the ice, as it took all the summer following the winter season to break out of the ice prison, finally they finally escaped on March 14 1899. During this long, helpless drift in the Antarctic sea the little party was 1,100 to 1,250 miles from the nearest human beings on the south shores of Terra del Fuego.

It was found that the severity of the weather depended upon the direction of the wind. In the second half of March, 1898, for instance, there were strong south winds and low temperatures. South winds bring cold, clear weather. North winds, coming from the open sea only a few score miles away, bring cloudy weather and frequent fogs, with temperatures rising to zero or even to the thawing point. The drift of the vast ice field was also found to be directly a function of the wind. Throughout the year, the ice, with the imprisoned vessel, was in slow-motion. For a wide belt south of South America there is a general set of winds and waters to the east, but south of the 70th parallel, where the Belgica was in the ice,

impossible. The aspect of the pack ice was constantly changing. It felt the influence of the ocean swell as well as of the winds. Generally very compact, there were sometimes wide gaps in the ice or long channels or narrow veins of water. Then the openings would close by freezing or pressure, and in the latter case ridges of hummocky ice would mark the line of contact. In the openings of the ice some seals and penguins appeared, particularly during the last months of the winter, and they proved a desirable addition to the bill of fare. The polar night was marked by more or less impairment of heart action among the men, and Lieut. Danco succumbed to the malady.

During the winter a series of important meteorological observations were obtained, but the details are not given in this report. Fine collections were also made of specimens of pelagic and deep sea fauna and sediments. The party had very hard work getting out of the ice last summer, and everything looked like a second winter in

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Not the Judge He Thought He Was.

Everyone knows how easy it is for everyone else to be mistaken, and yet so many of us continue to express very hasty judgements of persons and things. Here, for example, is a scrap of conversation reported by an exchange:—

'I distrust that man on sight,' said Jinks meaningly. Jinks is one of the men who think they are borne detectives. 'Yes, sir I wouldn't trust that man with a saucepan lid.'

'H'm,' said Ratibson, who happened to know the man in question, and held a very different opinion. 'And why not, may I ask?'

'In the first place, do you notice the stooping, insinuating way in which he carries his shoulders? That's craft.'

'Oh!'

'In the second place, you observe that he clutches his fists as if he had a grip upon something that nothing would persuade him to loosen. That's cupidity.'

'Ah!'

'In the third place, do you see how furtively he glances from side to side? That's guilt.'

There was a pause.

'I happened to know that man,' said Ratibson.

'And I am right?' demanded Jinks, triumphantly.

'No; you are wrong. He has just become proficient enough to go in the street with his bicycle. Nearly all bicycle riders have these signs.'

'Ah!'

Irritating.

Tenderfoot—'What did the men who lynched that fellow dance on his carcass and riddle it with bullets for?'

Lone Pine Bill—'Because they wuz

dead sore on him—'Why! what was the trouble?'

Lone Pine Bill—'Wa-al, it, pears of how he turned out to be the wrong man.'

A HOME MADE HAPPY.

MRS. TUCKER, OF NIAGARA FALLS
TELLS WHAT DID IT.

Her Daughter was Afflicted With St. Vitus' Dance and Helpless as an Infant—Dr. Williams' Pink Pills Cured Her After Special Treatment Failed.

From the Review, Niagara Falls.

It is a horrible feeling to know that you have lost all command or control of your limbs, and most depend upon your friends to wait upon and serve you the same as an infant. This was the condition of Miss Myrtle Tucker for nearly a year, and the Review learning that she has been wonderfully benefited by the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People sent a reporter to hear her story. We called at the residence of Mrs. Edwin Tucker, of the village of Niagara Falls. Mrs. Tucker received us very cordially on ascertaining the object of our visit. As nearly as possible these are her exact words in speaking of her daughter's case:—'My daughter Myrtle is in her fifteenth year. About a year ago alarming symptoms of St. Vitus' dance made their appearance, but for some time we did not know what was really the matter. She lost the use of her arms, her right arm was completely paralyzed. She had to be dressed and undressed, being totally unable to help herself. The best local physicians were called in and prescribed for her, but they appeared to be unable to afford relief. We made a trip to Buffalo last January and a specialist was consulted, who recommended that Myrtle be shut up in a dark room for three months, allowing no one to see her or speak to her but the nurse. In fact the doctor insisted upon her being sent to one of the city hospitals. Arsenic was one of the specifics used; it helped to quiet for a time, but no permanent relief was obtained. After our return from Buffalo, my son urged me to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Myrtle. He said he was sure it would do her good as it had cured his boy of a similar complaint. I was then determined to try them as I was conscious the treatment she was getting was doing her no good. I purchased a box and the effect of the pills was almost marvellous from the very beginning; before the first box was used an improvement was plainly discernible. Five boxes in all have been used and Myrtle is now able to run and enjoy herself in a manner she could not do for months and months back. Two weeks ago she commenced to attend school. 'I want it distinctly understood,' said Mrs. Tucker, that the physicians all agreed that my daughter was afflicted with St. Vitus' Dance; that the treatment of the medical attendants did not benefit her and that no other medicine was taken after commencing Dr. Williams' Pink Pills so that there is no doubt her recovery must be attributed to the use of these pills. Her state of health is now most excellent, her appetite is good and I am only too pleased to be able to certify to the above facts in order that others similarly afflicted may be encouraged to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills.

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Reminiscence.—They had been married seven years; the doctor had been called in and pronounced him a very sick man; as his wife entered the room after the doctor's latest visit he called her to his bedside, and in a tremulous voice remarked:

'Darling, I am going.'

Leaving over him she stroked his head gently, and reminiscently replied:

'Cheer up, Clarence; that remark assures me that you will live; don't you remember how often you said that during our courting days and how persistently you didn't go?'

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