

## REPORT II.

## SECTION—ANTARCTIC TO CAPE ROYDS.

30th December, 1916.—At 8 p.m. we encountered a quantity of drift ice, with appearance of "blink" to the southward. The experience of previous expeditions with regard to the pack ice of the Ross Sea teaches one that a passage round the pack is quicker than a passage through it. The longer a vessel can retain her freedom of action the shorter period she is likely to occupy in crossing the pack belt. Acting upon this we have been steaming to S.W. (true) during the twenty-four hours, with the main pack apparently to the eastward all day.

1st January, 1917.—The New Year found us steering through loose ice, skirting the pack in a westerly direction and making boards to the southward, where the sky showed clearer water. At midnight on this day we reached the edge of the main pack, lat.  $70^{\circ} 20'$  S., long.  $178^{\circ} 46'$  E. Very strong blink to the south extending to east-west. As the strong blink of this pack appeared to indicate that this was the main body, I now decided to go west, as nothing could be gained by going a few miles south and then getting stuck. During the following day we continued on a westerly and south-westerly course, blink becoming less marked and conditions looking more promising as we proceeded.

2nd January, 1917. At 8 p.m. on this day we may be said to have entered the pack: position, lat.  $70^{\circ} 20'$  S., long.  $175^{\circ} 20'$  E. We steered south-west into big leads till 4 p.m., when pack became close, but having got as far as possible.

3rd January, 1917.—During the day some progress was made to the southward through leads, and part of it was occupied in watering ship from a large floe. Ice becoming closer at 6 p.m. we stopped. The following three days it blew a blizzard, with thick snow, during which time the vessel drifted in loose pack, or steamed in open leads, in smooth water.

6th January, 1917.—Mount Sabine was sighted, bearing S.W. (true) at 100 miles distance.

7th January, 1917.—At 10 p.m., the wind having moderated, we forced our way to the S.E. through long lanes, afterwards getting into a long lead extending to S. (true). The recent gale had torn large channels in the pack, and it was by making use of these in a southerly direction that, at 4 p.m., we entered the open Ross Sea, the passage through the pack having occupied five days, of which three were spent sheltering from the weather. The belt of pack where crossed extended for a distance of 104 miles in a north-and-south direction. Continuing south into the Ross Sea along the western coast of Victoria Land we encountered fields of ice, which we in most cases avoided by steering to the eastward.

9th January, 1917.—At noon Mounts Erebus and Terror, the former 13,350 ft. high, were sighted at a distance of 130 miles; and at 9 p.m. Beaufort Island was sighted.

10th January, 1917.—At 5.35 a.m. Beaufort Island was passed at a distance of 6 miles, and we proceeded round Cape Bird into McMurdo Sound. No pack ice was encountered at all, but at 10.20 a.m. we were off Cape Royds and met the fast sea ice, which extended south from this point across the sound. Cape Evans was visible 7 miles to southward, but there was no sign of life there. We now came alongside the ice-edge at Cape Royds, and I despatched a party, under Sir E. Shackleton, to the hut of the 1907 expedition to look for some record. This party returned on board, having found a record stating that the Ross Sea party were housed at Cape Evans. Just before their arrival on board a party of six men, with dogs and sledge, was sighted approaching the vessel from the direction of Cape Evans. At 1 p.m. this party arrived on board, and we learned that of the ten members of the Expedition left here when the "Aurora" broke away on 6th May, 1915, seven had survived, viz.: A. Stevens, E. Joyce, H. E. Wild, J. L. Cope, R. W. Richards, A. K. Jack, I. O. Gaze. These seven men were all well, though they showed traces of the ordeal through which they had passed.

I regret to report that the Rev. A. P. Spencer-Smith died of scurvy on the Barrier, 20 miles S., 60 E., from Hut Point, on 9th March, 1916; and that Captain Mackintosh and V. G. Hayward perished on 8th May, 1916, in a blizzard, whilst attempting to cross the sea ice from Hut Point to Cape Evans. An inquiry was held into the circumstances concerning the loss of Captain Mackintosh and Mr. Hayward, and attached hereto is a detailed statement gathered from evidence furnished by the surviving members of the party, who further report that they had, on the first opportunity, searched the locality of the track followed without finding any traces of the missing men.

11th January, 1917.—This day was spent in carrying out some repairs to the main engines, which were completed at 10 p.m. I considered that a remote possibility existed of Captain Mackintosh and Hayward having drifted across to the western shore of the sound, and therefore now took the opportunity, when the weather was clear and fine, of proceeding to Butter Point, where the only food depot known to these men existed. We got under way at 10.30 p.m.

12th January, 1917.—At 12.15 a.m. the ship reached a point  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles east of Butter Point before being stopped by the fast ice. A party left the ship, under Sir E. Shackleton, to make an examination of the vicinity. On returning he reported that after crossing  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles of rubbly and water-logged ice they came within 30 yards of the piedmont ice, but owing to the cliffs being too high and moving slushy ice intervening they could not land; further, at the point cut by the cross-bearings of the depot the land ice had broken away, but was visible in the form of two large bergs grounded to the north of Mount Barne. There was no sign of the depot or of any one having visited the vicinity.

At 8.30 a.m. the ship returned to the fast ice off Cape Barne, Cape Evans now bearing E. by S. (true), distant 5 miles.

13th January, 1917.—A party under Sir E. Shackleton was despatched from the ship with the object of searching the area north of Glacier Tongue, including Razorback Island, for traces