

Australasian Antarctic Expedition

1911-1914



Under the leadership of
Sir DOUGLAS MAWSON, Kt.,
D.Sc., B.E., O.B.E., F.R.S.



SLEDGING IN ADELIE LAND.

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THE AUSTRALASIAN ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION, 1911-1914.



AS the Nineteenth Century grew old, exploration was pushed out rapidly in every direction. The dark places of the world, Central Africa, Central Asia, the Amazon Valley, and New Guinea were each over-run and mapped. At last only the Polar regions were left untrod.

To the new generation of explorers, the vast white world of Antarctica began to sparkle as the most brilliant attraction of the unknown. So, in the opening of the Twentieth Century a hurricane of expeditions, British, Norwegian, Swedish, French, Belgian, German, and Japanese descended upon it. The summer of 1911-12 saw ROALD AMUNDSEN and ROBERT FALCON SCOTT and their respective companions at the South Geographic Pole.

Then DOUGLAS MAWSON, who already had taken a distinguished part in the Shackleton Expedition by sledging to the Magnetic Polar area, organised another from an Australian base. His aim was different from that of his predecessors, for he planned not to break records nor to make sensational journeys, though he did both, but to gather all possible scientific information about Antarctica.

He chose for his field of research the untouched Australian quadrant of the mainland, together with Macquarie Island, one of the most important but least known of the islands of the Antarctic seas. A large staff of trained investigators was stationed apart to observe and collect thoroughly over as wide an area as possible.

In "The Home of the Blizzard," Sir DOUGLAS MAWSON has told a thrilling tale of how this work was done, how discoveries were made and success won, sometimes at the cost of hardship and even death.

The scientific fruits of the Mawson Expedition were excellent in quality and quantity; indeed, few polar expeditions have reaped so large a harvest. But when this material was brought home to study, the Great War had begun its devastating course, and its out-rippling swathe of ruin threatened to submerge even Antarctic Science. All the trouble and expense that had gone in gathering notes and specimens was likely to be lost for lack of specialists to study them and for funds to produce the results of their studies.

At this crisis, the Government of New South Wales, on the initiative of the Hon. W. A. HOLMAN, then Premier, smoothed away difficulties by undertaking to publish the Scientific Results of the Expedition as a national work.

This enlightened policy has given a connected account of Antarctica far more complete than existed before. Indeed, there are many accessible places in agreeable climates of which much less is known as regards the details of climate, geology, fauna, and flora than we now learn of the desolate Commonwealth Bay, by the Antarctic Circle, or than we can here read of Macquarie Island, the utmost farthest south reached by ferns, grass, and flowers.

The Antarctic should not be imagined as a replica of North Polar regions; it is quite unlike, it is a world apart. Far within the Arctic Circle grow grass, flowers, and even shrubs; and there are many mammals, birds, and insects. But in the south land there is no life whatever except the seals and sea fowl on the beach; yet, in compensation, the Antarctic Sea is amazingly rich in life. Tremendous glaciers, the largest in the world, some of which stretch a hundred-foot high cliff for many miles in the open sea, would seem to forbid the presence of any living thing—yet an almost continuous sheet of invertebrates is spread over the floor of the sea around such glaciers. Many volumes of this series are occupied in describing and illustrating the various kinds of fish, crabs, shells, urchins, starfish, and the like which flourish here.

The contribution to Geology is large and varied. Nowhere else does ice work on so gigantic a scale, for the land is buried so deeply that the explorers met rocky exposures only occasionally. Specimens of every kind of rock were found in the moraines, carried down from the interior by the glaciers.

In its rocky strata great variations in past climates are recorded. There is represented an age of forest growth and a time when coral reef structures flourished in the seas; but the only evidence of glaciation so far met with is of comparatively recent date.

The Antarctic Regions are to-day in the throes of a great ice age such as devastated Northern Europe and America in Pleistocene times. To the Antarctic the student of glacial phenomena on the grandest scale must turn to-day.

The meteorological and magnetic data to appear in these publications are unusually extensive, and, as such refer to regions from which hitherto no data of this nature have been available, the value of the record is unique.

For any student engaged on Antarctic topics, this magnificent series of high-class scientific memoirs is indispensable. In a broader sense there is hardly a province of biology, geology, or meteorology, in which they do not afford valuable and original information.

These monographs are written by specialists in their different departments, and they are splendidly printed and illustrated. All large libraries, universities, and scientific institutions should take this opportunity of now procuring what must always be original scientific sources. Both the whole set and the separate memoirs must greatly appreciate in value with the progress of time, **for they are issued at a price which hardly represents one-third of the expense of printing.**

The price for the individual parts will probably total about £30. Orders for the whole work will, however, be accepted at £25, or for the individual series at £7 10s. for Series A, £7 10s. for Series B, and £12 10s. for Series C.

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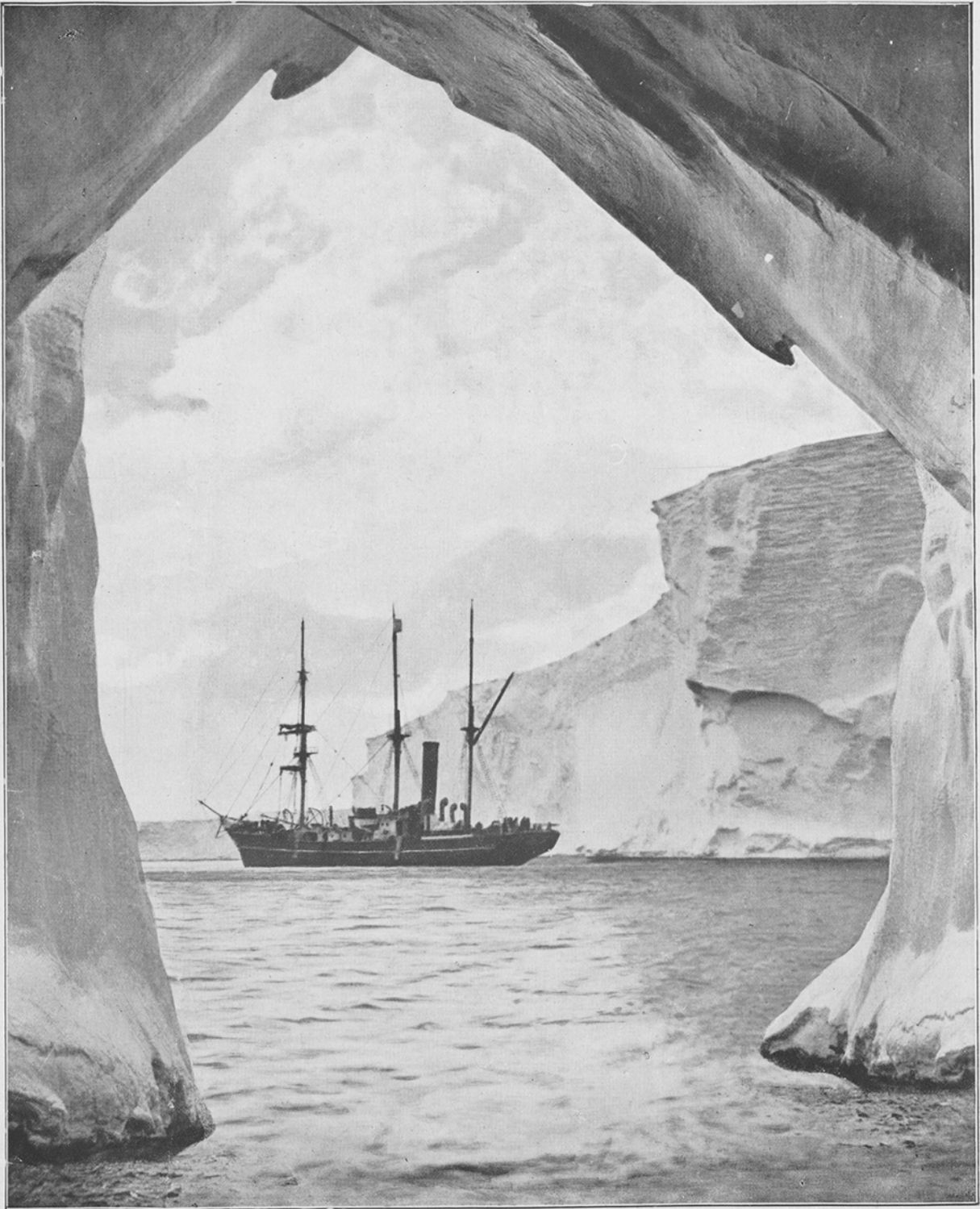
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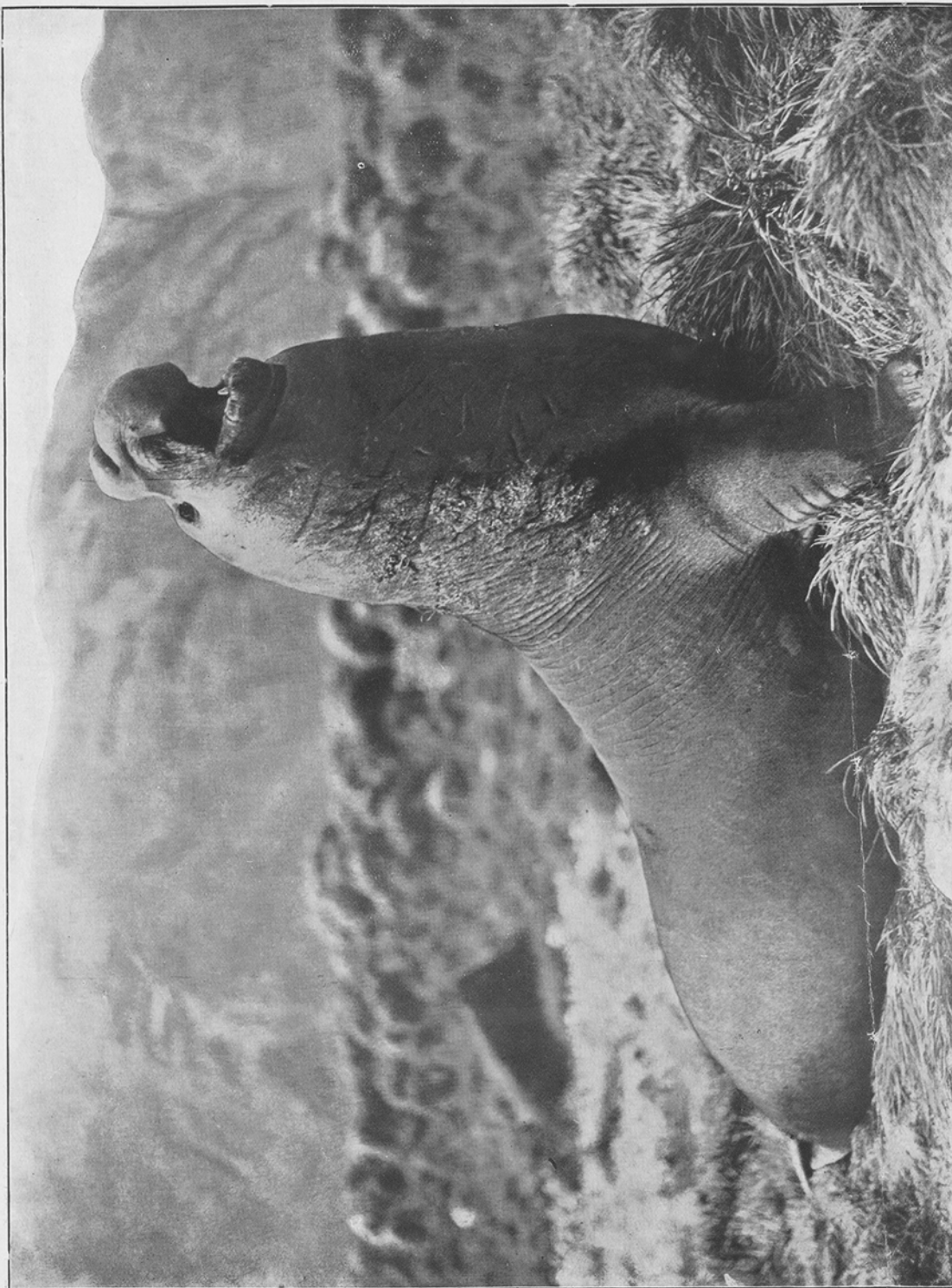
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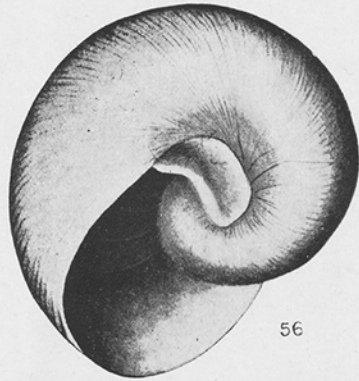
THE S.Y. *AURORA* (SEEN FROM AN ICE CAVERN) LYING CLOSE TO THE WALL OF THE MERTZ GLACIER TONGUE.

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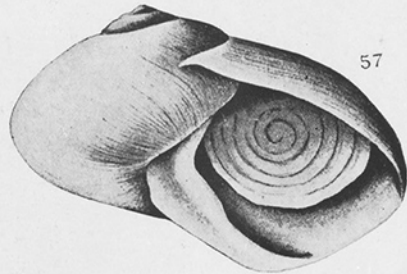


A BULL SEA-ELEPHANT ON THE DEFENSIVE.

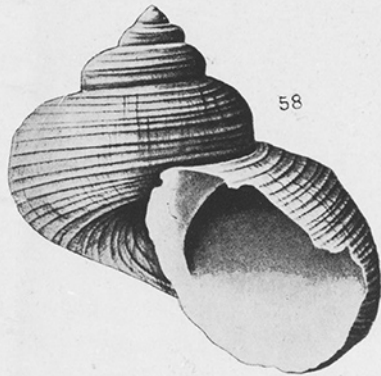
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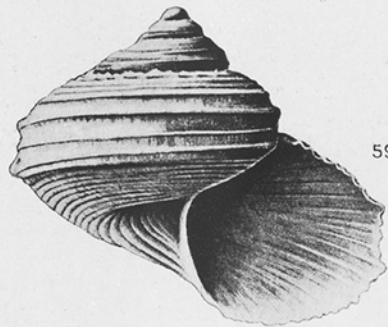
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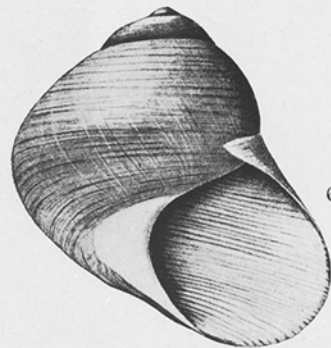
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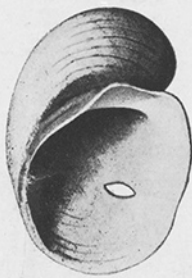
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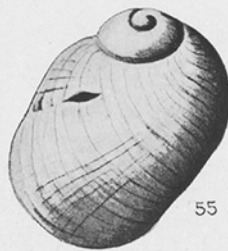
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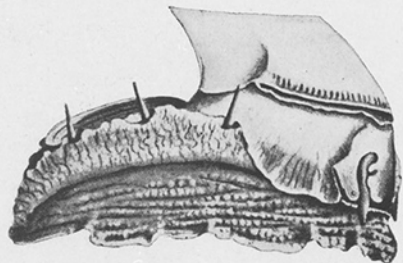
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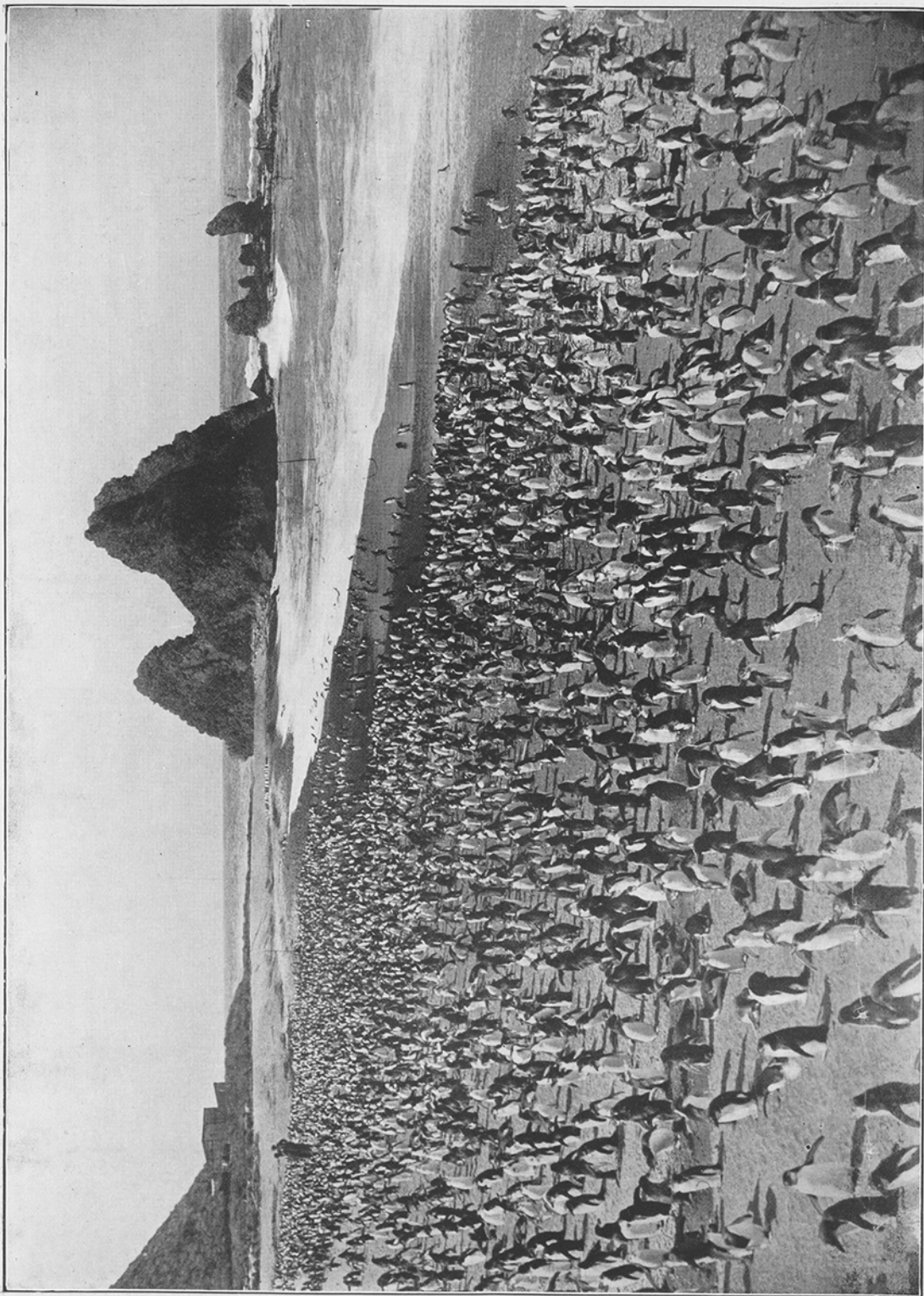


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Phyllis F. Clarke.

SEA SHELLS FROM ADELIE LAND AND MACQUARIE ISLAND.

SAMPLE PLATE.



ROYAL PENGUINS THROUGING THE NUGGETS BEACH.

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