He himself was recently in Vienna, when the Austrian people showed great enthusiasm in welcoming back the officers of the Austro-Hungarian Expedition, which had just returned. The letter from the President of the Royal Geographical Society, read at the meeting of the Austrian Geographical Society, was received with the greatest pleasure, and the news that the English Government had decided on sending out a new Expedition would awaken an echo of sincere joy in the Austrian capital. The emulation which existed was without any jealousy, for each nation was only striving how far it could contribute to the one great end. It had been said that the utility of such an Expedition was not very evident, but the truth was that no one could ever tell what would be the final result of scientific discovery. If the undertaking only served to stimulate the courage, daring, and boldness, and to keep up the chivalry that had always distinguished the British navy, that would suffice, but to an Englishman, even the most modest of them, it was certain, never imagined that they would be the source of the marine cable and the telegraphic wire. There could be no doubt that discoveries connected with magnetic science must result from a nearer approach to the Pole, and those discoveries might lead to, in the way of practical utility, no one could possibly decide. His chief purpose in addressing the meeting, however, was to say that the Society was very much indebted to the President personally for the success of his efforts to bring about a new Polar Expedition. Sir Henry Rawlinson had never been discouraged or disheartened, and had never ceased to take a deep interest in the subject, and, in the end, his courage and perseverance had been rewarded by complete success. He therefore proposed that the thanks and congratulations of this Society be offered to Sir Henry Rawlinson, as President of the Royal Geographical Society, for his successful efforts in obtaining from Her Majesty's Government a favourable consideration of the proposals for another Expedition to the North Pole.

Admiral Sir EDWARD OSBORN seconded the motion. No one connected with the Council of the Royal Geographical Society for the last few years, knew more intimately than he himself did, or appreciated more highly, the exertions, tact, and discretion with which Sir Henry Rawlinson had acted; and he was sure the Fellows of the Society would join him in hoping that, as they were now able to congratulate their President on the result of the efforts of a considerable number of years, and on the going forth of the Expedition, so he might be in the same place to receive their congratulations on its return, which he (Admiral Osborn) believed would be a glorious one.

The President thanked the meeting for their kind vote, and in doing so said that, if any honour were due for what had been done, he must be allowed to claim it, with his predecessor, Sir Randle Screvene, through whom the matter had been brought exhaustively before the Government.

There were one or two other matters which he wished to notice before proceeding to the business of the evening. News had that day been received from Colonel Gordon, to the effect that he was at Conoboro on the 5th September, and that he then had the sections of his steamer, destined to navigate Albert Nyanza, at Mount Rejaf below the Falls, having full confidence of getting them transported to the smooth waters of the Upper Nile beyond the Falls, in a fortnight, or little more. A packet had also just been received, containing a journal and maps from Mr. Stanley on the East Coast of Africa. It appeared that he had ascended the Ruki River to a certain distance, and had sent home a map of its delta with a full account of his journey, which, he believed, would be published in the 'Daily Telegraph' of the following morning.

The real business of the evening to which he would now advert related to a subject of very great importance. Her Colonial Empire was one of the chief sources of the greatness and strength and glory of England, and it was impossible to overrate the importance to this country of the great continent of Australia. When the Royal Geographical Society was first instituted, forty years ago, nothing was known of Australia except a few square miles in the vicinity of the chief towns; but at the present time scarcely any part of it had not been visited. Of late the great object had been to discover fresh pasture lands for sheep-farming. It was a most important feat when Macdonnell Stuart crossed the continent from the south to the north along the line where the telegraph now runs. This was in 1859, and since then the great desire of explorers had been to traverse the intermediate country between Stuart's route and the West Coast.

In the course of the last thirty years, on no less than ten different occasions the Society's Gold Medal had been awarded to geographers for explorations in Australia. Mr. Eyre received the medal in 1843; it was next awarded to Captain Charles Sturt, to whom geographers were greatly indebted, and Dr. Leichhardt. Mr. Augustus Gregory received the medal in 1857, and Mr. Macdonnell Stuart in 1861, he having been presented with a gold watch for his previous exploration in 1859. The medal was awarded to the unfortunate O'Hara Burke, after his death, in 1861; and Mr. John King, who was with him, received a gold watch. Mr. Frank Gregory received a medal in 1863, and this was followed by the name of Colonel Warburton, who had been awarded the medal in the year 1931, and to whose indomitable energy, perseverance, and capacity for personal endurance, it was mainly owing that his expedition was finally successful.

**Journey across the Western Interior of Australia.**

Colonel P. NORRIN WARBURTON spoke as follows:—Mr. President and gentlemen of the Royal Geographical Society: My first duty is to return my sincere thanks to the Society for the honour they have done me in presenting me with their gold medal. I need not dwell upon the gratification which that presentation afforded to me personally and to my numerous circle of friends; but I may say that I think and I hope that it will act as an incentive to others in Australia to do far more than has been already done. Though last on the list of those who have been honoured with the Society's medal, I am, I think, the second from South Australia who has received it, the only one previously being John Macdonnell Stuart, of whose name all South Australians are justly proud, for he accomplished a most wonderful feat. In what I have to say I hope I shall not be accused of boasting; when I assure you that the journey we went through was well nigh proving too hard for us. It was by the merciful interposition of Providence alone that our lives were saved—but there was nothing whatever to spare. We got off with our lives, and our lives only; and therefore all boasting or vain-glory would be absurd. We had to start from "Alice Springs," in very near the centre of Australia, and having once started, we were not permitted, nor, I believe, did any of us wish, to look back. We had no fresh horses, no fresh camels, no fresh
to give him except a chance bottle of mustard. It did not do him any good; but before we ourselves were aware that this master-bull was at all sick, the young bulls were all acquainted with it and were jumping about in most lively style. The necessity of having a comptroller, a President over the camels, will be apparent when I tell you that the trick the young ones have is to cut off two or three female camels and run them away as hard as they can; so that we were obliged to kneel-halter them and tie them as tight as we could, or else we should have lost our bones in the sand, because all our camels would have run away from us in little troops. However, they certainly behaved well to us when we did not give them the opportunity of doing the reverse.

Perhaps you would like to learn, too, what sort of eating they make. Unfortunately, we had to eat seven of them. I daresay when the animal is fat and well fed on oilcake and other things, it cannot be very bad; but when he has been worked to that extent that he is unable to stand, and is shot only because it would be a pity to leave him to rot, his meat is not very good, and it is interlaced with large sheets of parchment. He looks a very large animal, but there is very little meat on him. He is more bone than anything else; and I can assure you that all the buckets of meat—for the bucket was our cooking-vessel—that we cooked when a camel was killed, never, in any single instance that I can remember, was there one single bubble of grease on the surface. The head is somewhat of a delicacy, and the feet are really very good, for his condition does not affect his feet very much. In our distress, however, we were obliged to eat him, inside and outside too; and his hide is pretty good when you cannot get anything else: but if anybody here has had the boldness to taste the contents of a carpenter's glue-pot, it comes to very much the same thing. We were compelled, by absolute starvation, to eat our last camel all but the hair—clean through from end to end; and after the bones had been lying in the sand some days, they were broken up to make broth of, and, in the course of a short time, I don't think any of the animal was to be seen. The advantage of the camel is, that he can work until he cannot work any longer, and then you can eat him.

Perhaps one of our greatest misfortunes connected with the camels was, that a good many of them were struck with the land-wind at night in the loins, so that when we got up at three or four o'clock in the morning it was reported that this camel or that camel could not move. Of course every camel we lost was a reduction—and a very considerable one—in the chance of our saving our lives; and, there—
natives were driven off as soon as the camels could come up. The lad, I am happy to say, recovered, and he is now in my house in Australia—or was there—doing exceedingly well. I do not know whether you are aware of it—it may seem a very trifling thing—but a black fellow's skull is about five times the thickness of a European's. It really is. I do not mean as to his intelligence, for there I dare say he is as sharp as any of us, but I mean in actual thickness; and unless it were so, I do not know how he could possibly sustain the blows with most massive clubs that are administered on his head.

I never had the pleasure of seeing one of the women's skulls; but I imagine that they must be even thicker than the men's, for they have to endure even more blows.

I must not trespass longer upon your time, except to give you a faint description of our miserable condition just at the last. We had succeeded in our object; we had traversed the whole of the unknown country, and were located on Frank Gregory's furthest point, on the Oakover. We had reached that water by a miserable night march, in which I, being somewhat too old for the work, was obliged to be strapped to the back of a camel, because I could neither sit nor stand. We reached that point, but were not able to go any farther. We had eaten the greater part of our camels, and had only three left. One could not work at all, and the question with us was how we were to get from that point to a station which we thought existed somewhere on the De Grey, though we did not know where. It turned out that this station was 170 miles away from us. We had no beasts to carry us; we were utterly unable to walk 100 yards; and therefore it was quite clear we could not have got down in the ordinary way. I therefore took the two camels that were tolerably capable of work, and sent the two strongest of our party down the river to look for the station, and to endeavour, as a last resource, to procure some provisions, and beasts to carry us. During their absence we lay there on the bank of the Oakover, which at that time had not a drop of water in it. We had, however, a water-hole separate from the river. We lay there for a great many days, not knowing when our party would come back. Sometimes we caught a bird, and there were plenty of fish in the water-hole close by our side. We had hooks and lines, but they would not bite, and we had no net; so we saw the fish, and knew they were there, whilst we were starving. There were also plenty of ducks about, but they would not settle on that water where we were, and we could not walk after them, though we had powder and shot. Day by day we went down for bathing, but for nothing else; and we were being cruelly starved to death. To show you what changes are met with in Australia, I may mention that the bed of the Oakover at that point was 300 or 400 yards in width; but there was not a drop of water in it, and probably there had not been for a long time. We went to bed one night, when the channel of the river was quite empty, but at 3 o'clock in the morning it was full to the bank, with plenty of ducks and large trees, borne along by the current, floating on its surface. It was then a splendid river. The party that I had sent down behaved admirably. They reached Messrs. Grant, Harper, and Anderson's station, where they were received with the greatest kindness. Horses and provisions were at once supplied, and to the liberality and promptitude of these gentlemen we entirely owe our lives. Not only did we receive such kindness from individuals, but we were treated in the same manner by every community we passed through. We were regarded by the Government as guests of Western Australia from the moment we set foot on the inhabited parts. We were franked back to our own shores, close to the seaport of Adelaide; and I owe the authorities a very great debt of gratitude, which I take this opportunity of expressing. If there be any point upon which I have failed to make myself understood, I shall be happy to give explanations, if Sir Henry will kindly tell me what the Meeting would most like to hear.

Sir CHARLES NICHOLSON asked Colonel Warburton to give some details as to the vegetation and geology of the country through which he had passed. The region traversed by Macdonnell Stuart was of the most unpromising kind, and he was frequently in danger of perishing for want of water. Burke and Wills died of starvation in a country now occupied by sheep-runs, and which possessed all the physical conditions necessary for supplying human wants. He therefore wished to ask Colonel Warburton, if, notwithstanding the barren character of the country which he had passed through, he thought it possible that in time portions of it might not be made available for pastoral purposes? Colonel EVERTON WARBURTON replied: Unfortunately I am neither a geologist nor a botanist, and therefore cannot give any scientific account of the matter; but certainly a great part of the country which Stuart went over, so far as the south of Alice Springs is concerned, is most excellent pastoral country, with plenty of water and good grass all along the Stephensons. Around Alice Springs there are now cattle-stations, and to the north of the McDonnell ranges the country is fit for stock. That celebrated explorer Stuart had a theory that the centre of Australia was a depressed basin. Unfortunately my barometer—and I had only one—went wrong; and as I did not know when it went wrong, I cannot tell up to what date its readings were to be trusted, though they were taken carefully every day. The foot of the McDonnell Range is about 2700 or 3000 feet above the level of the sea. Neither I nor any of my party was sensible of any descent on the north side, and I think the part I traversed is high sandy tableland, and certainly I...
should say that none of that land is likely to be occupied for a great many

generations. Nothing but the direst necessity could ever induce a man to go

there; for, in the first place, he would have to introduce some kind of grass, and he
would have to carry for an immense distance every single article of food that
he required, except meat. There are no animals there—not even a wild dog.

There is no water. I got the bones of a dog out of one well, but that only
showed what a silly dog he was to go there. There is no animal except the
wallowy, which can do without water. I can assure you that when we killed
a camel there was no single kite or bird of any kind that had the curiosity
to come near, and see what we were doing. The natives live on this little wallaby.

Mr. Bell asked whether there were any kangaroos?

Colonel Egerton Warburton.—Neither kangaroos nor emus, nor any single
animal of any utility. I have seen the wallabies in the hands of the natives,
but I never saw one on the ground.

Sir George Campbell asked what the natives fed on?

Colonel Egerton Warburton.—There is a small acacia seed, which is
very black and as hard as a little bit of granite, and on these the natives
feed also—it is their vegetable diet; and we ate them, roasting them
on a tin-plate, and then cracking them up, sometimes between two stones, and
on a tin-plate, and then cracking them up, sometimes between two stones, and
called the Leichhardt or walnut-tree; but its fruit is harder than stones, and
cannot be eaten.

Mr. Francis Galton asked Colonel Warburton if the natives had been
troublesome on many occasions?

Colonel Egerton Warburton.—Only on one occasion: I was on foot, and
get out of the track. The camels were coming behind me, and hearing a little
noise I looked round, and found nine natives with spears close to me. Two of
them, young men, in order to show their zeal for the work, had their spears
pointed to throw at me; but, as reports travel great distances out there, I
suppose they had heard of the wonderful effects of firearms, and when I
advanced on them with my pistol they lowered their spears. There were a
few old men amongst them, and by dint of passing our hands over each other's
grey beards, to see that they were not tied on, we got on amicably. That
we caught an urchin once; but it was by chasing a mother, who had this
with us. We caught an urchin once; but it was by chasing a mother, who had this
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