

November 1, 1932.

Dear Captain Riiser-Larsen,

It was very good indeed of you to give us so interesting an account of your plans for exploration in the Antarctic. We shall print them in our next issue.

May I also, as one with slight experience in the Antarctic with Captain Scott, congratulate you on the boldness and at the same time the soundness of your plan of operations.

It seems quite the quickest and the best way of filling in the gaps on the edge of the continent, a work which must claim the gratitude of every geographer. You know that coast so much better than anyone else that I feel that any criticism of your plan is impertinent, yet I trust you will not forget that in the months of February and early March the sea-ice is very liable to break up and float northwards with very little warning indeed, even in calm weather. For the rest of the year, and especially in the spring, coasting along the land according to your plan should be safe enough, and productive of the best type of map.

May I presume on my two winters spent in the Antarctic to suggest to you that it is not quite safe to rely on finding Weddell Seals in quantity in the depth of winter. They do, of course, visit their breathing holes, but they seem to have a large number, and if you had many dogs to feed it might be difficult to get a full supply. This hint simply means that it will be advisable to choose your wintering place in May when the seals are still on top of the ice, and kill your supply for the winter then.

May I conclude by envying you your trip, which, though full of hardship and risk, will at the same time be full

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of results. Given good companions and plenty to do there is no such thing as Polar tedium, and I feel sure that you are going to make a success of the expedition.

I would like to write at length about such things as blubber stoves, iron runners for sea ice travel, etc, but I doubt whether I could suggest anything you have not already thought of.

You have the hearty good wishes of this Institute in your venture and if there is anything we can do to assist in your preparations, please let us know. If you really feel you would like any suggestions as to the kind of observations which might be useful I would gladly write at length about certain aspects of sea-ice and land-ice which would be of interest to students of glaciology; but I fear to trouble you with too many suggestions. You will be bust enough as it is.

Yours very sincerely,

*Frank Debenham.*