

How Dr. Cook tried to pervert American History

A speech made to Congress in 1915



Ooqueah, Ootah, Henson, Egingwah, Seegloo. April 6, 1909 at the North Pole. Photo by Robert E. Peary.

Every true American educator must resent the recent efforts to poison the minds of the children of this country with respect to the discovery of the North Pole. Many newspapers seem to have been misled and have fallen into the trap of offering Dr. Cook's book as prizes for essays from the children upon the subject of the priority of the discovery of the North Pole, and then, while the children were in the act of writing such essays, printing a mass of material furnished by Dr. Cook and giving a wholly distorted idea of the facts, yet in such a subtle way as to give the impression of fairness. (Page 25)

Introduction

“American history must not be perverted.” Congressman S. D. Fess spoke that phrase about Dr. Cook in his 1915 speech. Yet 87 years later Dr. Cook is promoted on the Internet, thorough books and conferences financed with a \$1,000,000.00 tax-exempt trust fund whose eternal duty it is to continue the Cook vendetta against North Pole discoverers Henson & Peary.

Excerpts

“...One would think that when a man has been, by his own acts of folly and deception, utterly discredited and held in disgrace by his own countrymen, who are, frankly ashamed of him, he would shut up, keep out of the way, nor dare to appear in any public capacity. Yet Dr. Frederick Cook, the archfaker among Arctic explorers and climbers of Mount McKinley, has nerve enough to erupt again.”

*“In foisting this fraud upon the world Cook was guilty of much more than an injury to the man whose laurels he was falsely claiming. It has been a great loss to all the world that one of those rare events in which mankind spontaneously finds occasion for triumph and rejoicing was converted into a time of noxious wrangling...**That Cook was an outright imposter, without the slightest title to consideration was doubtless as well known to Peary from the beginning as it is to us all now.**”*

Congressman Fess saw Cook as a manipulative and unethical person:

- Cook offered prizes (his book & tickets to his vaudeville show) to school children for essays about who was first to discover the North Pole
- Cook used the “unthinking public” to sign petitions for Congress to award him a medal, falsely claimed Congress was investigating his North Pole claims, etc. to gain publicity for his anti-Peary vaudeville show
- Cook falsely claimed endorsements of his North Pole story by famous people such as South Pole discoverer Amundsen, General Greely, Capt. Baldwin and other experts who in fact refuted Cook and had told him to stop using their names

This last trick is still used on the Frederick A. Cook Society website:

*“Amundsen...discoverer of the South Pole...We shall always honor Dr. Frederick A. Cook as the first man at the geographical North Pole of the earth. **It was a pity that Peary should besmirch his beautiful work by circulating outrageous accusations against a competitor who has won the battle in open field.**”* (<http://www.cookpolar.org/verdict.htm>)

Fess, in 1915, noted Cook used this same false endorsements:

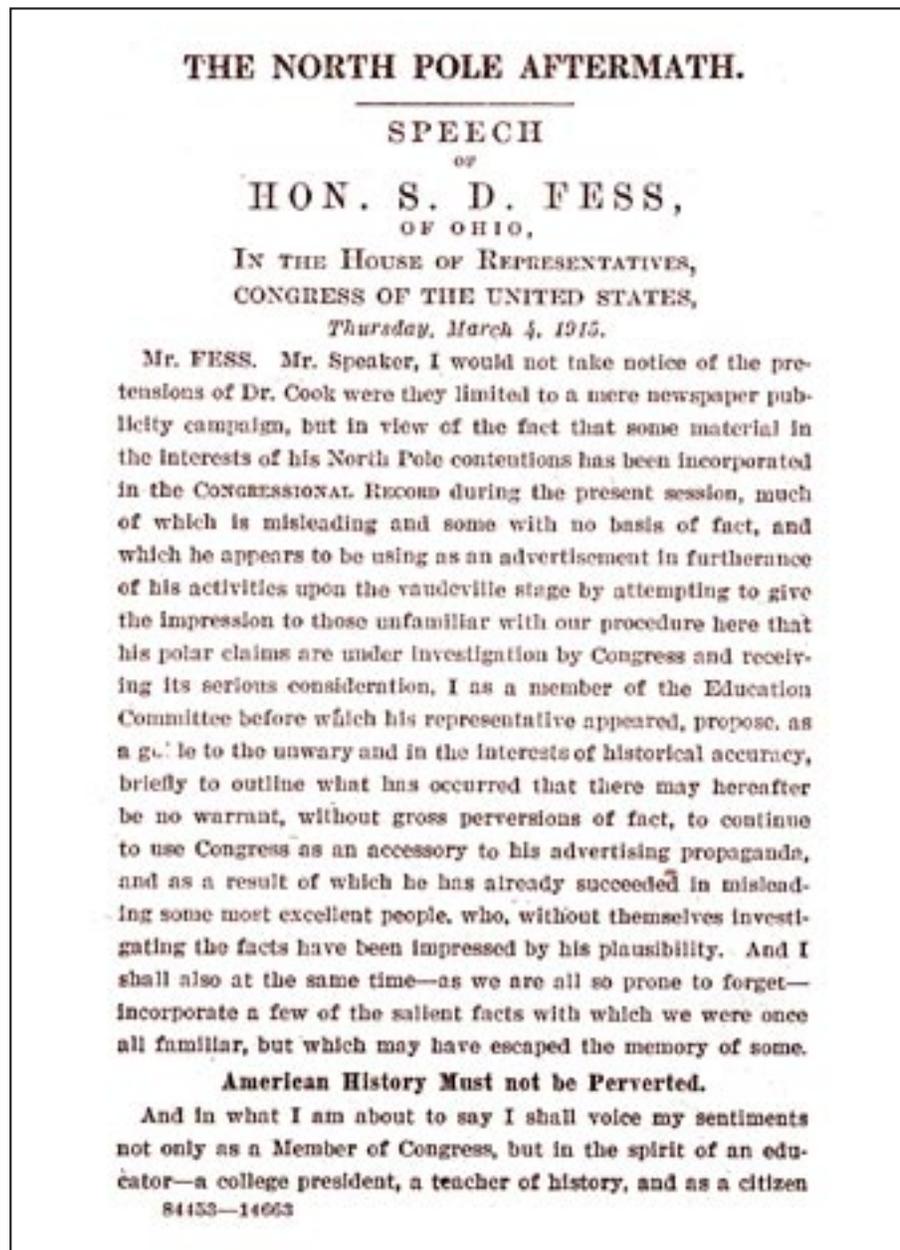
On the cover of Dr. Cook’s book...are printed the names of a number of Arctic explorers and of others whom it is alleged support him...“There was absolutely nothing in these alleged observations of Dr. Cook,” said Capt. Amundsen. **“It was all fake and could have deceived nobody. Thus, in sorrow, was I forced to the conclusion that my old comrade was lying.”**

I hope you enjoy this remarkable historic document and use it in some way that helps to restore honor & glory to the achievements of the 1909 North Pole expedition. Thank you.

Verne Robinson

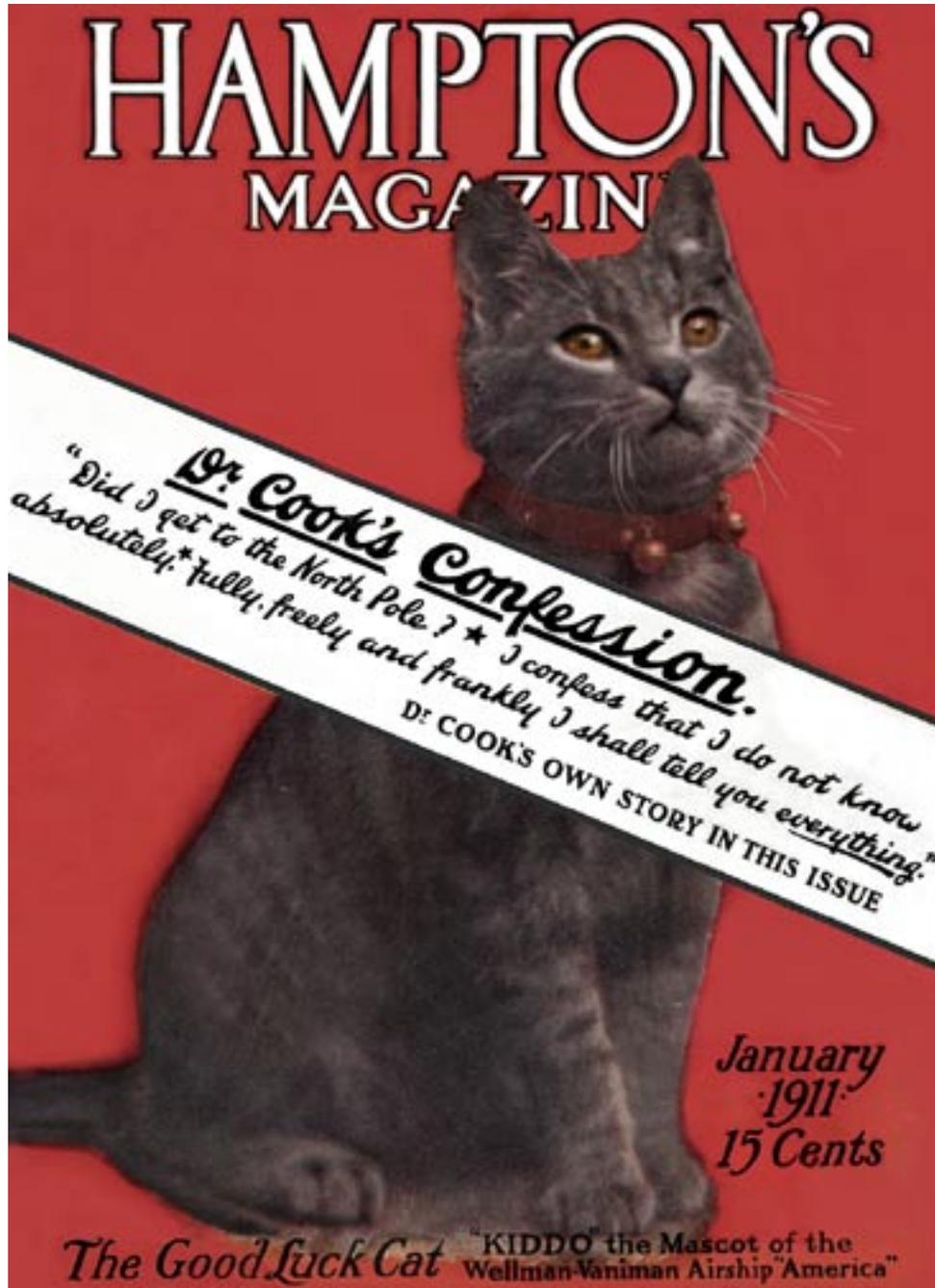
“...Peary...has been defrauded of something which can never be restored to him...the claim of the cheap swindler has dimmed the luster of the true discoverer's achievement. He will receive the full acknowledgment, that his work merits, in the form of recognition from scientific and other bodies and of a sure place in History...”

(Page 18)



Scanned image of the front page cover of the 1915 document from which the text in this edition has been restored. You will find that we have been absolutely faithful to the original text. Similar fonts and styles have been used to preserve the original look. No attempt was made to modernize spelling or usage.

“...Dr. Cook attempted to deceive the world with malice aforethought and in cold blood that he might win fame and fortune. There are no extenuating circumstances.” (Page 18)



“...an article appearing over the signature of Dr. Cook in the January, 1911, number of Hampton’s Magazine, a confession by him that he did not know whether or not he had reached the pole ...it was a simple matter...to examine the newspaper file of that period – as I did – and to see that **Dr. Cook, in interviews, fathered the very statement which he was attempting to repudiate; indeed, that he not only did not repudiate it, but that he expressed himself as in accord therewith.**” (Fess)

“...Dr. Cook has deliberately entered upon a campaign of justification, not for the sake of making the world believe him regardless of reward, but for the sake of dollars and cents to be won. He has organized his fraud and capitalized his deceit.” (Page 17)



From the 1911 Hampton's magazine "Dr. Cook's Confession".

Cook's first public photo after hiding for almost one year. With the money Hampton's paid him for his "Cook's Confession" story and money from his die-hard supporters Cook began his come-back book. *My Attainment of The Pole* laid out his polar vendetta against Robert E. Peary and other critics. For years Cook traveled the vaudeville and Chautauqua circuits promoting his claims and selling the angry, phony book across America.

THE NORTH POLE AFTERMATH.

SPEECH
of
HON. S. D. FESS,
OF OHIO,
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Thursday, March 4, 1915.

Mr. FESS. Mr. Speaker, I would not take notice of the pretensions of Dr. Cook were they limited to a mere newspaper publicity campaign, but in view of the fact that some material in the interests of his North Pole contentions has been incorporated in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD during the present session, much of which is misleading and some with no basis of fact, and which he appears to be using as an advertisement in furtherance of his activities upon the vaudeville stage by attempting to give the impression to those unfamiliar with our procedure here that his polar claims are under investigation by Congress and receiving its serious consideration. I as a member of the Education Committee before which his representative appeared, propose, as a guide to the unwary and in the interests of historical accuracy, briefly to outline what has occurred that there may hereafter be no warrant, without gross perversions of fact, to continue to use Congress as an accessory to his advertising propaganda, and as a result of which he has already succeeded in misleading some most excellent people, who, without themselves investigating the facts have been impressed by his plausibility. And I shall also at the same time—as we are all so prone to forget—incorporate a few of the salient facts with which we were once all familiar, but which may have escaped the memory of some.

American History Must not be Perverted.

And in what I am about to say I shall voice my sentiments not only as a Member of Congress, but in the spirit of an educator—a college president, a teacher of history, and as a citizen jealous -that there should be no perversions of our American history. I may add that while Dr. Cook has called upon me, and both he and his representative have pressed his claims upon my attention, it has never been my privilege to meet Admiral Peary. Therefore I do not speak from the standpoint of personal friendship for the discoverer of the North Pole, but I honor him for the luster he has shed upon the American Nation by his achievements, and trust that a clear statement of the case will aid in preventing further misrepresentations (such as the latest to the effect that the Congress is investigating Dr. Cook's claims) and may lead those who are not experts in Arctic matters and not familiar with the facts to remember that it is well to be upon their guard lest, as has recently been said, “the skill and acumen of a practiced faker” be at work—qualities that are subtle and not always readily discernible.

Peary's Position Unquestioned and Unassailable.

The public mind should be refreshed at this juncture. Peary's journey in quest of the North Pole and to make polar soundings and tidal observation was undertaken with the sanction and full approval of the President of the United States and at the Navy Department; indeed, he went to the Arctic under the direct orders of the President as Commander in Chief of the Navy. The Congress more than four years ago thoroughly investigated his journey and records and by formal act extended to him the thanks of Congress for reaching the North Pole, and by authority of the same act he was raised to the rank of rear admiral. Peary appeared before the congressional committee which took the testimony and was examined at great length concerning his trip, observations, records, etc.

The report of the committee presented January 21, 1911, was unanimous that Peary had reached the pole. It is, however, particularly deplorable that through false and misleading newspaper reports resulting from Dr. Cook's press propaganda he should from time to time succeed in linking his name with Peary's, and thereby in, the minds of a part of the unthinking and uninformed public, create the impression that there was a possible question about Peary's attainment of the pole.

The Report of the Congressional Committee.

For the report in full of the congressional committee investigating the matter of Peary's successful trip to the North Pole see House of Representatives Report No. 1961, third session Sixty-first Congress, from which I shall excerpt a few salient paragraphs.

Peary Reached the North Pole April 6, 1909.

The committee after reporting that "Robert E. Peary reached the North Pole on April 6, 1909," declared:

Your committee have come to the above conclusion after a careful examination and hearing by the subcommittee extending over several days at which Capt. Peary appeared in person and gave important testimony submitting all his papers, original data, daily journal kept by him during the journey and notes of astronomical observations and soundings, etc.

Continuing, the report set forth:

Your committee also heard—

The report of the National Geographic Society of Washington;

The report of the president and one of the boards of governors of the Royal Geographical Society of London, which society, through its official computer, had made an independent examination of the data and proofs;

And also a report from Hugh C. Mitchell and C. R. Duvall, expert computers of astronomical observations, from the Coast and Geodetic Survey of the United States.

As to the ability of Messrs Mitchell and Duvall, Mr. O. H. Titmann, Superintendent of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, testified that they were professional computers employed by his bureau, and that, speaking as the head of the bureau, he was of opinion that they were "unsurpassed anywhere in ability or experience"; that he considered them "unsurpassed" not only in that bureau, but "in that line of work anywhere." See pages 134 and 135 of the testimony reported by the committee.

The committee in their report declared:

These reports of the American and British societies and of Messrs. Mitchell and Duvall of our own Coast and Geodetic Survey are submitted in full in the printed report of the hearings had before your committee.

These hearings established the fact that Peary reached the North Pole on the above-named date in pursuance of a well-defined and carefully laid plan which he had been able to formulate as the result of more than 20 years Arctic experience and which he was able to carry out because of an indefatigable earnestness and singleness of purpose.

As a result of this plan, when he reached out over the Arctic Sea, as had been done by other explorers—Nansen, Cagni, Greeley, Lockwood, Markham, and others—and came to a point beyond where they had turned back, and beyond where he himself in former excursions had been obliged to retreat, he was able, by reason of his supporting parties, to go forward with sledges filled with provisions and fresh dogs for locomotion, these very essentials of success having been conserved for his final dash.

Peary Also Won Farthest North Record in 1906.

The report of the congressional committee of investigation asserted:

Three years before, in 1906, Peary had reached 87° 6', the farthest north ever attained up to that time. He then learned the necessity of more careful preparation, and, returning to the United States, planned a campaign by ship, men, Eskimos, dogs, canned provisions, lighter equipment, to the very last detail, which resulted in success.

Thus Peary, as the result of each of two independent trips to the Arctic regions, established records farther north than has any other explorer in the history of the world, his successful trip to the North Pole having broken the previous record which he held.

Peary Went to the Arctic Under Official Orders.

The committee reported:

Peary was an officer of the United States Navy and charged with the specific duty in which he was engaged. President Roosevelt, July 3, 1908, detailed Peary to report to the Superintendent of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey and instructed that Peary be ordered to make tidal observations along the Grant Land and Greenland shore of the Polar Sea.

Mr. Peary entered the Navy in 1881 and has served almost 30 years, he is at present a civil engineer with the rank of captain. When leaving for his polar trip, the Acting Secretary of the Navy wrote him that he was granted this leave of absence for Arctic explorations because he is believed to be better equipped than any other person in the country to undertake such work.

“You have,” said the letter from the Navy Department, “the requisite courage, fortitude, and physique; you have had a longer term of service within the Arctic Circle than any other explorer; and you have had large experience in sledge journeying on the land and upon the polar pack; you have demonstrated your ability to maintain yourself in that latitude for a longer period in health and safety than any other explorer; you have reduced the inconveniences and hardships of the Arctic service to the minimum. The attainment of the pole should be your main object. Nothing short will suffice. Our national pride is involved in the undertaking. This department expects that you will accomplish your purpose and bring further distinction to a service of illustrious traditions.”

The President of the United States gave Peary this parting injunction:

“I believe in you, Peary, and I believe in your success if it is in the possibility of man.”

Brief Outline of Peary’s Campaign to Reach the Pole.

Our congressional committee of investigation outlined Peary’s successful campaign to reach the

North Pole as follows:

Going into winter quarters at Cape Sheridan, tidal observations were commenced, and the members of the expedition began the transportation of supplies westward to Cape Columbia. This became a camp and depot of supplies, from which the journey over the Arctic Ocean to the pole was to begin.

The winter months of 1909 were occupied in preparing Eskimos, dogs, and other equipments. After careful training the Eskimos and dogs were in the best condition, hard and fit for the work that was before them.

The men, Eskimos, and dogs were divided into supporting parties. Each supporting party was independent in the matter of supplies and equipment; they were sent north over the ice at intervals of a day or more each.

In this way the first supporting party sought and found the easiest trail, which could readily be found by the succeeding parties coming on.

Capt. Bartlett accompanied Peary to latitude $87^{\circ} 47'$, or within 133 miles of the pole. At this point they exchanged signed statements as result of observations, and Bartlett turned back with his supporting party, leaving Peary with picked dogs, good sledges, and plenty of provisions, and in fact the very best equipment and supplies for the final journey.

In five marches from where Peary and Bartlett parted, Peary reached the long sought for goal.

Peary's Observations and Instruments.

The report declared:

Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Duvall figured the position of Peary at the pole independently, but based on the same observations and by independent methods. Their calculations agree within a second of latitude.

Mitchell states that from his professional experience it would have been impossible for the data of these observations to have been obtained other than under the circumstances claimed. The observations at the pole were made at different times. He states that in using these observations in connection with each other they, in a measure, prove each other, and that error could be detected had the observations not been made at the points set forth in the data. In other words, the two independent observations taken, on the 6th and 7th, with the sun in the same direction, practically agree upon comparison.

On the return of the Peary party to the United States the standard chronometer used by Peary was sent to its makers for rating and comparison.

Peary's Return From the North Pole.

The committee's report sets forth the speed of Peary and his various supporting parties comparatively and with considerable detail, as follows:

The return journey was made more quickly than the outward journey. There was a trail easily distinguishable, and both men and dogs realized that they were returning to land.

Peary covered 27 outward marches (413 miles) in 16 return marches with the pick of Eskimos and dogs all in good condition, $25 \frac{1}{2}$ miles per march.

MacMillan, of the first supporting party, covered 7 outward marches (82 miles) in 4 return marches, $20 \frac{1}{2}$ miles per march.

Borup, of the second supporting party, covered 12 outward marches (136 miles) in 7 return marches with partially crippled men and poor dogs, $19 \frac{1}{2}$ miles per march.

Bartlett, of the fourth supporting party, covered 22 outward marches (280 miles) in 13 return marches, $21 \frac{1}{2}$ miles per march.

Bartlett returned from his farthest, $87^{\circ} 47'$, in the same number of marches (13) as Peary did from that same point.

Later in the season MacMillan and Borup returning from Cape Jesup with the same dogs used on the northern trip, covered 275 to 300 miles in 8 marches, and on more than one occasion covered, over 50 miles in a march.

Shackleton, on his outward journey, made marches of 18 and 20 miles. He returned without dogs, and he and his men, dragging their own sledges, made marches of 20, 26, and 29 miles.

The report then declares—and I desire particularly to emphasize the next paragraph, showing that Peary had at last attained the goal of centuries of effort:

Your committee recognized that the attainment of the North Pole has been the object of the world's famous explorers for centuries past; that Peary, overcoming almost insurmountable obstacles reached the goal of a life's work, that he was specifically commissioned to do so by his commander in chief, the President and the Secretary of the Navy.

The committee then reported that if Peary had not gone to the Arctic he would already have been a rear admiral, and that the advancement in rank which they recommended would really have the effect of decreasing the remuneration he was then receiving from the Government. Upon these points the committee declared:

Peary has at present the rank of captain. Had he remained at home and served as a chief of one of the bureaus at the Navy Department he would to-day have the rank of rear admiral. It is proposed in this bill to bestow upon him this rank with the retired pay of that grade: such retired pay, the committee learns from the Navy Department, will be \$300 per year less than the pay he is now receiving from salary and allowances under his present rank.

Honors Awarded Peary.

The committee further reported that up to the date of its report (Jan. 21, 1911) Peary had already received the following recognition for his discoveries:

The special great gold medal of the Royal Geographical Society of London.

The special great gold medal of the National Geographic Society of Washington.

The special great gold medal of the Philadelphia Geographical Society.

The Helen Culver medal of the Chicago Geographical Society.

The honorary degree of doctor of laws from Bowdoin College.

Honorary member of the New York Chamber of Commerce.

Honorary member of the Pennsylvania Society.

The Nachtigall gold medal of the Imperial German Geographical Society.

The King Humbert gold medal of the Royal Italian Geographical Society.

The Hauer medal of the Imperial Austrian Geographical Society.

The gold medal of the Hungarian Geographical Society.

The gold medal of the Royal Belgian Geographical Society.

The gold medal of the Royal Geographical Society of Antwerp.

A special trophy from the Royal Scottish Geographical Society—a replica in silver of the ships used by Hudson, Baffin, and Davis.

The honorary degree of doctor of laws from the Edinburgh University.

Honorary membership in the Manchester Geographical Society.

Honorary membership in the Royal Netherlands Geographical Society of Amsterdam.

The North Pole the Greatest Geographical Prize of Three Centuries.

Upon this point the committee said:

The President of the United States and the Secretary of the Navy have recommended that fitting recognition by Congress be accorded Peary for this great achievement. The scientific societies of the world accord in pronouncing this the greatest geographical prize of the last three centuries. It is a matter of just pride that this honor has come to the United States.

The Committee's Tribute to Peary and its Recommendations.

The committee reported:

Your committee believed that in view of his long distinguished service in the Arctic regions in ascertaining the northern boundaries of Greenland; his soundings and tidal observations; his ascertainment of facts concerning the northern Arctic Ocean; the general information he has obtained by living over 12 years within the Arctic circle; and finally having successfully followed a carefully laid plan resulting in his reaching on April 6, 1909 and bringing back to civilization the conditions existing at the North Pole, that Robert Edwin Peary has performed a most remarkable and wonderful service; that he has attracted the favorable attention of the civilized world; and that therefore the American people, through its Congress, shall render him thanks and bestow upon him the highest rank of the service which he adorns.

These, Mr. Speaker, are the important paragraphs in the official report of the committee of investigation and upon which the Congress of the United States acted when they extended to him the thanks of Congress, and authorized that he be raised to the rank of rear admiral. And in submitting the report to the Congress they transmitted the testimony before them, covering 142 printed pages.

The act of Congress adopted upon report of the committee became effective March 4, 1911. So much for official American recognition of the services of the explorer.

Action of the Royal Geographical Society of Great Britain.

Although our own National Geographic society had acted with more rapidity than did Congress and had more than a year prior to the act of Congress acclaimed Peary the discoverer of the North Pole, it is of interest to note that the Royal Geographical Society of Great Britain accorded Peary the highest honor within their power, nearly a year before Congress acted, to wit, on May 4, 1910, at a meeting of the society in Albert Hall, London. In conferring upon Peary at that time the special gold medal of the society, President Darwin, son of the great scientist, Charles Darwin, extended to him, in the presence of its members, the fullest assurance of their conviction that he was "*the first and only human being who has ever led a party of his fellow creatures to a pole of the earth,*" for it will be remembered that at that time' the South Pole had not as yet been reached. He said:

I stand here to-night as the representative of the Royal Geographical Society, and, armed with the full authority of its council to welcome you, Commander Peary, as the first and only human being who has ever led a party of his fellow creatures to a pole of the earth.

At the same time the vote of thanks to Peary was moved and seconded by two of Great Britain's most

distinguished Arctic explorers, Admiral Sir George Nares and Admiral Sir Lewis Beaumont. The motion was also supported in a feeling speech by Capt. R. F. Scott, who so soon was to lose his life returning from the South Pole, The proceedings may be found set out in full in the Geographical Journal of London for August, 1910, pages 129 to 148.

Subsequently Admiral Peary laid before the Royal Geographical Society additional proofs of his attainment of the pole and supplemental to those previously submitted. This was not done at their request, but voluntarily, that there might be no question hereafter as to the action of that world-famous organization being based upon adequate examination of Admiral Peary's proofs. President Darwin wrote Peary on December 5, 1910, in his official capacity as president of the society, acknowledging the receipt of the documents and advising him of the results of the examination of same. He said:

They have been thoroughly examined by us. In the opinion of my council there is nothing in this or any other new matter which has come to their notice that in any way affects the position indicated by me when I, on behalf of the society, presented you with a special gold medal at the Albert Hall for your explorations, during which you were the first to reach a pole of the earth.

And about the same time another member of the council of the Royal Geographical Society wrote Admiral Peary advising him that the documents he sent had been "most thoroughly and critically examined." Both these letters are set out in full in the record of the proceedings before our congressional investigating committee. So much for the recognition of the services of the explorer by distinguished men and bodies in foreign countries, and more particularly mentioned in the report of the committee as quoted supra.

Some of Dr. Cook's Recent Activities With Respect to Congress.

As to Dr. Cook's repeated efforts to get more notoriety by keeping a North Pole lobby at work in Washington, it will be recalled he procured a joint resolution in his behalf, to be introduced in the Senate last spring (April, 1914). It was referred to the Library Committee, and a subcommittee, which was named to look into the matter, flatly refused to give aid or encouragement to the investigation of any such subject, and there the matter ended in the Senate.

The American Press Saw the Humor of the Situation.

While editorial discussion is usually timed in seriousness, in this case there were numerous humorous newspaper comments upon the subject when the resolution was introduced, as Members of Congress may remember, such as—

Now introduce a resolution that Perkin Warbeck was really King of England and that Madero died of indigestion. Go as far as you like.
(Dallas Herald.)

—
Maybe he also believes there is a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow.
(Birmingham Age-Herald.)

But why insist upon the rest of us limiting our intelligence?
(Reading Telegram.)

—
Let us not be wastefully, ridiculously excessive. Why spend \$300 for a medal for Dr. Cook when he'd feel just as happy and look a lot more natural with a 50-cent wreath of flowers around his neck? (New York American.)

—
If Dr. Cook gets that medal from Congress he may decide to send it to Copenhagen as a mark of gratitude for the free dinners he received there. (Cleveland Plain Dealer.)
Gold or leather? (Des Moines Capital.)

—
If Doc Cook gets from Congress that medal for discovering the North Pole, he may come back and want one for scaling Mount McKinley. (Detroit Free Press.)

—
Why not strike off 98,781,323 duplicates and give everybody else in the country one, too? (Boston Transcript.)

—
Why not vote Jack Johnson a subsidy as balm for abuse heaped upon him prior to his going abroad? (Los Angeles Express.)

—
Vaudeville, having received the doctor cordially, why not Congress?
(Tacoma Ledger.)

—
As some seem to think that the Ananias Club is a committee of that body, a motion to so refer it might be in order. (Tampa Daily Times.)

—
“Doc” always has some new scheme for getting before the public just about the time people have forgotten him. (Johnstown Leader.)

—
Surely some recognition should be given the most stupendous fraud of the age.
(Portland Oregonian.)

—
Dr. Cook might accept a medal, but the chances are that he would shy if anybody were to offer another wreath of roses. (Washington Star.)

—
I would not repeat these quotations were they not called out by the character of the vaudeville performances of the subject of their comment.

Not satisfied with the Senate's ignoring of his resolution, Dr. Cook had another one introduced in the House shortly after the Senate Library Committee had dropped consideration of the one before it, and the House resolution provided for action by Congress with respect to the discovery of the North Pole. It was referred to the Naval Committee in course of regular routine, and in accordance with the usual procedure it was sent to the Secretary of the Navy to report upon. Secretary Daniels recommended that the resolution be not favorably considered. In his report to the committee, dated July 30, 1914, he set forth the facts in possession of the Navy Department in reference to the

discovery of the North Pole, Peary's promotion to rank of rear admiral, and so forth, and closed the report as follows:

Believing that no useful purpose could be accomplished by such an investigation, the department recommends that the resolution (H. J. Res. 282) be not favorably considered. Should, however, it be the desire of Congress to institute such investigation, it is recommended that the same be conducted by some form of commission independent of any governmental department.

Thereupon the Naval Committee of the House of Representatives dropped consideration of the matter. Dr. Cook, however, had still another resolution upon the subject presented and drawn in such a way that it was referred to the Education Committee, of which I am a member. This committee at the time knew nothing about the matter having been before the Naval Committee or of the report of the Secretary of the Navy, and one evening at one of the meetings informally heard *ex parte* some statements by three or four persons whom Dr. Cook desired to have heard. I had no intimation of the purpose of any member of the Committee on Education to give a hearing to anyone. *The meeting was not of the committee*, as there was not a quorum present, and the minutes show there was not.

An Illustration of Dr. Cook's Evidence.

There was an attempt to lead the committee to believe that in an article appearing over the signature of Dr. Cook in the January, 1911, number of Hampton's Magazine, a confession by him that he did not know whether or not he had reached the pole was inserted in the article without his knowledge and approval. It is sufficient to say that this was an attempt to impose upon the credulity of the committee, for it was a simple matter for any of its members to examine the newspaper file of that period—as I did—and to see that Dr. Cook, in interviews, fathered the very statement which he was attempting to repudiate; indeed, that he not only did not repudiate it, but that he expressed himself as in accord therewith. It is needless to go into the subject of this resolution further. Suffice it to say that the committee adopted a resolution dropping consideration of the matter and by common consent declined to publish the proceedings of the informal meeting before mentioned.

Then, a few days thereafter, the same method of procedure was again followed by Dr. Cook, and still a further resolution upon the subject was introduced, and this time it was referred to the Library Committee of the House of Representatives. That those not familiar with the procedure in Congress may not misunderstand how simple a matter it is to introduce a resolution, I need only say that all that need be done is for a Member of Congress to file the resolution and it goes automatically to one of the numerous committees. The Library Committee gave no consideration to this new resolution. Notwithstanding this record, Dr. Cook, through advertisements and announcements in various parts of the country, has succeeded in some quarters in giving the impression that Congress was much interested in his claims and was giving them consideration. Comments upon this phase is unnecessary in the light of the record here, and it is not worth while to incorporate them here.

The Character of Evidence Dr. Cook Submitted at Copenhagen.

It is well for us to remember that the forum selected by Dr. Cook for the determination of his claims was the University of Copenhagen. He sent it what he declared were his proofs of his alleged discovery of the North Pole; but he failed to appear in person before the commission of experts the university appointed to pass upon the question. It found that Dr. Cook had utterly failed to establish his claim.

Repudiation of Dr. Cook by the University of Copenhagen.

The verdict of the University of Copenhagen of December 21, 1909, is fully set forth in the papers of the world of December 22, 1909. I quote, however, from an editorial in *The Outlook* which succinctly covered the important facts. This editorial said:

It was by the University of Copenhagen that Dr. Cook himself elected to be judged; the verdict of that court of decision, thus selected by himself, must be accepted by the world as final and conclusive. The wonderful tales now put forth as to the cause of the disappearance of the original documents in the case will have no effect on the mind of the public, because that public had already become wearied with a long series of inconclusive and improbable statements heretofore made. Dr. Cook had several months in which to prepare his case and submit it in proper form to that tribunal to which he thought fit to have it referred. The result has been a total collapse of his claim, always based chiefly on his bare assertion that he had been the first to reach the North Pole.

What Dr. Cook Submitted at Copenhagen.

The *Outlook* editorial, continuing, said:

The committee of scientists to whom the University of Copenhagen submitted the claim report that what they received was, first, a narrative of the expedition, essentially the same as that printed two months ago in the *New York Herald* and prepared for the present purpose by Dr. Cook's secretary; and, secondly, what purported to be a typewritten copy of part of Dr. Cook's original notebook.

This alleged copy, they say, "does not contain any original astronomical observations whatever, but only results," and the committee declare further that "*the documents presented are inexcusably lacking in information which would prove that the astronomical observations therein referred to were really made*" and also contain no details regarding the practical work of the expedition and the sledge journey which would enable the committee to determine their reliability.

The Copenhagen Verdict Rejecting Dr. Cook's Claims.

The *Outlook* quoted the same as follows:

The committee's final verdict and the verdict of the university consistory is expressed formally in the finding of the latter:

"The documents handed the university for examination do not contain observations and information which can be regarded as proof that Dr. Cook reached the North Pole on his recent expedition."

The editorial mentioned also quoted individual expressions of opinion thus:

Officers of the, university in their individual expressions of feeling go even further. Thus, Dr. Stromgren, director of the Astronomical Observatory, at Copenhagen, and chairman of the committee on the Cook claims, is quoted as calling Cook's actions shameless, as admitting with sorrow and indignation that the university had been hoaxed, and as saying that "it was an offense to submit such papers to scientific men."

Rasmussen, a noted Arctic explorer who has favored Dr. Cook's claim, was called in as an expert by the university's committee; he is reported as saying:

"When I saw the observations, I realized that it was a scandal. The documents which Dr. Cook sent to the university are most impudent. It is the most childish sort of attempt at cheating."

It will be remembered that Rasmussen was the Danish explorer whom Cook declared, when he believed Rasmussen was in favor of his claims, was better qualified than any other explorer to pass upon the question then at issue.

The Outlook summed the matter up as follows:

The fundamental justification of the distrust which has been felt all along in this country by many scientific observers and students of the laws of evidence has been that, to put it squarely, Dr. Cook has not acted as would have acted a man of honor whose claims had been disputed and who knew that they were just. Dr. Cook, on the contrary, has carried on a long series of evasions and delays, and has apparently put his main efforts into making money by lectures, and through publication. In this way he gained, some say \$30,000, some say \$100,000. Finally, when patience was all but exhausted, he presented to a foreign court of inquiry a lame and even ridiculous case.

The mere fact that he did not offer to appear in person before the court he had himself selected, in order that he might answer inquiries, is most significant.

Dr. Cook's False Claims of Support by Polar Experts.

On the cover of Dr. Cook's book as now being sold in New York are printed the names of a number of Arctic explorers and of others whom it is alleged support him. Among them are Roald Amundsen, the discoverer of the South Pole; our own Gen. Greely, who in one of his Arctic expeditions broke the record then existing of the farthest north, taking it away from England after it had been held by that country for nearly 300 years; and Capt. E. B. Baldwin, of the Baldwin-Ziegler polar expedition of 1901. While it is true that these men, as well as many others, before Dr. Cook's methods were understood, credited him with veracity, it is the height of charlatanism now to name them as supporters, and the same remark, no doubt, applies to every other Arctic explorer familiar with the facts of the case whom Cook claims as a supporter.

Amundsen Repudiates Dr. Cook.

As to the position of Amundsen, the discoverer of the South Pole, I quote as follows from the report of an interview with him in the Detroit News:

Capt. Amundsen, himself unsuccessful in a search for the North Pole generously joined in the acclaim that at first hailed Dr. Cook as the discoverer, and remained firmly convinced that Cook was telling the truth until he (Amundsen) was given an opportunity to examine the data and observations that Dr. Cook laid before the University of Copenhagen.

"There was absolutely nothing in these alleged observations of Dr. Cook," said Capt. Amundsen. "It was all fake and could have deceived nobody. Thus, in sorrow, was I forced to the conclusion that my old comrade was lying."

General Greely Repudiates Dr. Cook.

General Greely, on October 14, 1913, sent out the following letter for publication:

To the editor of the New York Times:

Returning from Europe after 10 months' absence, my attention has been drawn to a recent editorial article, in the Times stating that I am quoted by Dr. Cook as indorsing his claim to have reached the Pole. When the North Polar discussion was at its height I published in the fifth edition of my Handbook of Polar Discoveries, under date

of Florence, Italy, January, 1910, the following opinion:

“The claims of Dr. Cook of reaching the North Pole have been thoroughly discredited by his failure to furnish to the University of Copenhagen his promised proofs of such journey.”

That opinion has never been modified.

A. W. GREELY.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

And Gen. Greely, at page 269 of his book, “Handbook of Polar Discoveries” asserts:

The marvelous and detailed claims of Dr. F. A. Cook, regarding his alleged attainment of the North Pole in 1908, are now generally and thoroughly discredited.

And at page 265 of the same work Gen. Greely declares:

R. E. Peary, the discoverer of the deep sea at the pole, who has won deserved fame by his attainment of the North Geographic Pole prior to its being reached by any other explorer—to the ability, endurance, and persistency of R. E. Peary the world owes the discovery of the pole.

Capt. Baldwin Repudiates Dr. Cook.

Capt. Baldwin publicly repudiated Dr. Cook in December, 1913, as was extensively reported in the papers of that period. I quote from a clipping upon the point as follows:

Baldwin had refused to desert Cook in the early stages of the controversy, which followed the return of Peary from the pole, and was widely advertised by Dr. Cook as an indorser of his claims. In a letter printed in the “Cook book” Capt. Baldwin sought to defend the pretender from the charge of falsifying documents, refusing to accept the declarations of others to that effect. Now he is convinced to the contrary, since his own statements have been so amplified and altered by Cook that he has felt impelled to make public refutation of them. Even his letter that appeared in the “Cook book” was “cooked,” and for two years Baldwin has been protesting against the further use of his name. * * *

When Baldwin was asked how he had come to stay so long in the Cook camp he said it was hard to believe the claimant had deliberately deceived, but after a careful study of documentary evidence he had become convinced that Dr. Cook “never was anywhere near the top of Mount McKinley and never got within hundreds of miles of the North Pole.” Baldwin states that he has reached the end of his years of defense of Cook, which continued “until I learned for myself the manner in which he plays the charlatan with documents and letters.”

It is needless to pursue this phase further. The matter was well but briefly summed up by the Washington Star some years ago in these words:

Dr. Cook has deliberately entered upon a campaign of justification, not for the sake of making the world believe him regardless of reward, but for the sake of dollars and cents to be won. He has organized his fraud and capitalized his deceit.

* * * The most deplorable feature of the matter at the present time is that it is possible for a self-convicted claimant to the highest honors in the scientific world to continue to reap a profit from the credulity and the partisanship of those who refuse to accept official verdicts.

The Chicago Inter-Ocean, at the time of the Copenhagen verdict, touched upon the situation as follows:

It is now possible to discuss Dr. Cook in plain language. The rejection of his “records” as worthless by the University of Copenhagen ends forever his claim to having discovered the North Pole. He stands today exposed as the chief imposter of the age. * * *

The single-handed achievement of which Dr. Cook pretended to be the hero had about it a glamor that won

him friends by the thousand. Peary's forthright utterance when, fresh from the north, he declared Dr. Cook had not been out of sight of land and had given the world "a gold brick," won Dr. Cook more friends. These friends have remained loyal through thick and thin. But it would now seem impossible for any but the most stubborn sentimentalist to preserve faith.

Many, no doubt, will cling to the belief that Dr. Cook at least was honest and believed he had discovered the pole. It seems almost heartless to shatter this last forlorn hope of loyalty. It will be remembered that Dr. Cook's two Eskimo companions asserted to Peary that Dr. Cook had turned south from Cape Thomas Hubbard. If Dr. Cook traveled south it is impossible he thought he was going north.

Nothing is left but to believe that Dr. Cook attempted to deceive the world with malice aforethought and in cold blood that he might win fame and fortune. There are no extenuating circumstances. Even common honesty must be denied him.

As a last resort, Dr. Cook through his secretary, sent a letter to the university committee saying judgment should be suspended until his instruments and original data could be brought from Etah. * * *

Good men everywhere must regret there is no law among the nations to punish this atrocious crime. For such an act of infamy the thumbs of the world turn down.

The New York Nation at the same time strongly brought out a point which every true-hearted American should take to heart:

In foisting this fraud upon the world Cook was guilty of much more than an injury to the man whose laurels he was falsely claiming. It has been a great loss to all the world that one of those rare events in which mankind spontaneously finds occasion for triumph and rejoicing was converted into a time of noxious wrangling.

As for Peary himself, he has been defrauded of something which can never be restored to him. The enthusiasm which in the first instance would have hailed the accomplishment of a feat that heroic venturers for three generations had strenuously sought to compass can never be resuscitated out of the possibilities of the past. Such is the temper of man.

False as it has been proved, the claim of the cheap swindler has dimmed the luster of the true discoverer's achievement. He will receive the full acknowledgment, that his work merits, in the form of recognition from scientific and other bodies and of a sure place in History, but the joy of the acclaim that should have greeted him at the triumphant close of his 23 years, quest can never be his.

And one more word of regret is in order. The denunciations of Cook's story telegraphed by Peary from the far North were made the occasion of criticisms which are now shown to have been unjust. That Cook was an outright imposter, without the slightest title to consideration was doubtless as well known to Peary from the beginning as it is to us all now.

Repudiation of Dr. Cook by American Organizations of Experts.

Although the University of Copenhagen found that Dr. Cook had utterly failed to establish his claim, it will be remembered that he was discredited by and expelled from membership in America's leading organizations made up of explorers, those most familiar with the problems involved in his claims.

Among those whose action was published to the world may be mentioned:

The Explorers' Club.

The Alpine Club.

The Arctic Club of America, and so forth.

The latter organization, *composed of American Arctic explorers, who had crossed the Arctic Circle*, expelled him while Admiral Schley was its president. Would not a man of a keen sense of honor, if he

had a righteous claim and really believed it should be investigated, instead of maintaining a lobby in Washington and besieging Congress, present his facts to the organizations of experts in exploration, which had expelled him, and ask them to reinstate him?

Until he has at least submitted his case to them, it is suggested that he has not purged himself or even attempted to purge himself of the odium which attaches to his name, fame, and cause, which fact alone ought to be conclusive that he has no proper standing upon which to appeal to the Congress of the United States to take time and money to investigate his claims.

Dr. Cook's Expulsion From Membership in the Arctic Club of America.

The printed bulletin issued by the Arctic Club of America, which is a different organization than the Peary Arctic Club and composed of explorers who have crossed the Arctic Circle, shows that at the annual meeting of the club, held December 22, 1909, officers were elected, including Admiral Schley as president, 75 members voting. This bulletin also says:

After the election of officers the following resolution was adopted after rather a lengthy discussion: "Resolved, That the further membership of Dr. Frederick A. Cook in the Arctic Club of America be referred to the board of directors just elected, with full power to act."

The same bulletin further shows:

"The first meeting of the board of directors for 1910 was held on the evening of January 5, 1910. The following resolution was unanimously adopted:

"Whereas the claims of Dr. Frederick A. Cook of having discovered the North Pole have been rejected by the University of Copenhagen and other scientific bodies; and

"Whereas Dr. Frederick A. Cook keeps in hiding instead of facing his accusers; and

"Whereas Dr. Frederick A. Cook has failed to communicate with the Arctic Club of America, whose members have so steadily proved his friends in the past: Therefore be it

"Resolved, That we consider the further membership of Dr. Frederick A. Cook in the Arctic Club of America as not to its interests, and that the name of Dr. Frederick A. Cook be dropped from the roll of members forthwith."

Dr. Cook Also Dismissed From the Council of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences.

The Washington Evening Star for January 6, 1910, contains the following report of Dr. Cook's expulsion from the Arctic Club of America and from the council of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, the scientific organization of Dr. Cook's home city:

COOK BARREN OF HONOR—ALMOST LAST VESTIGE OF SCIENTIFIC SUPPORT
GONE—ARCTIC CLUB OF AMERICA, WHICH HE FOUNDED, DROPS HIS NAME FROM
ITS ROLL.

New York, *January 6.*

The Arctic Club of America, founded by Dr. Frederick A. Cook and his supporters in the North Pole controversy, through its board of directors, has dropped the name of the explorer from the roll of membership.

The action of the Arctic Club directors last night was unanimous, and follows hard on the heels of the explorer's summary dismissal from the council of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences two days ago, and strips from the explorer almost the his vestige of scientific honors, only the degree of doctor of philosophy conferred by the University of Copenhagen remaining.

The Arctic Club of America led his the welcoming festivities to Dr. Cook on his return from Greenland and Copenhagen. Later the club tendered Dr. Cook, a former president of the organization, a banquet at the Waldorf-Astoria, while many of its individual members, including Admiral Schley and, Capt. Osbon, warmly championed the cause of Cook when his now discredited polar claim was challenged.

Dr. Cook's Claim to Having Ascended to the Summit of Mount McKinley, in Alaska.

Dr. Cook's contention that he ascended to the summit of Mount McKinley two or three years prior to his claim with respect to the North Pole is a matter with which the public generally is so thoroughly familiar that it is hardly worth while to comment thereon extensively. The Delegate in Congress from Alaska, who himself attempted the first ascent to the summit of the mountain in the year 1903, does not hesitate to say with respect to Dr. Cook:

All of us who know anything about Mount McKinley know that Cook's story of his successful ascent of that mountain is a deliberate falsehood. * * * His story was so fraudulent, that one does not have time to talk about it.

Explorers' Club Investigate and Reject Dr. Cook's Claim to Have Climbed Mount McKinley and Then Expel Him from Membership.

The Explorers' Club, after investigating Dr. Cook's claim to have climbed Mount McKinley, rejected it and expelled him from membership. The following account of their action I take from report in the Washington Post of December 25, 1909:

CLUB EXPELS COOK—EXPLORERS DECLARE MOUNT MCKINLEY "ASCENT" A FRAUD—EXPOSED IN LONG REPORT—NEEDING MONEY, FORMER FRIENDS SAY, HE PUT UP THE JOB—ASSOCIATES ON THE TRIP TO ALASKA ASSERT THAT PICTURES, HIS CLAIMS, AND HIS BOOK ARE ALL A SERIES OF PALPABLE FAKES—PHOTOGRAPHED ONE SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN AND MADE IT APPEAR TO BE ANOTHER—HAD NO INSTRUMENTS.

NEW YORK, December 24, 1909

The board of governors of the Explorers' Club met to-day in executive session and, standing in silence, voted with bowed heads that Dr. Frederick A. Cook be dropped from the rolls of the club for frauds practiced on its members and on the public. Preliminary to its vote of expulsion the board met to pass upon the report of its committee, which has been investigating the validity of Dr. Cook's assertion that he reached, the summit of Mount McKinley. This committee, in concluding an exhaustive report, recommended that—

"Dr. Cook's claim that he ascended the summit of Mount McKinley in 1906 be rejected by the Explorers' Club as unworthy of credence."

The committee's recommendation was based on its finding that—

"Dr. Cook had repeatedly made statements that have not been in accord with the facts, and that he had entered into agreements which he has failed to keep, and that the misstatements and broken agreements deal not only with matters appertaining to discovery, but to ordinary financial transactions, so that no credence can be given to statements made by him."

FRIENDS AMONG SIGNERS.

Among the signatures appended were those of Whitney and Anthony Fiala, both personal friends of Dr. Cook. The committee is further explicit in its statement that it undertook its investigation only after first apprising Dr. Cook of its purpose, which he approved in person; and that it has disregarded the testimony of Edward Barrill, Dr. Cook's guide, and of Frederick Printz, his packer, although such testimony was before them—because it wished

no cloud of partisan contention or question of financial interest to dim the integrity of its verdict.

In addition to Whitney and Fiala, the report is signed by Frederick S. Dallenbaugh, of the American Geographical Society; Prof. Marshal H. Saville, of the chair of archaeology in Columbia University; Walter G. Clark, Charles H. Townsend, director of the New York aquarium, and Henry G. Walsh, secretary of the Explorers' Club, and individual signed reports are submitted by Herschel C. Parker, professor of physics at Columbia, and Belmore Brown, both of whom are members of the Cook-McKinley expedition, and by Charles Sheldon who has recently returned from a year's residence on the slope of Mount McKinley, where he went for the purpose of studying the configuration of the mountain, with a view to the possibility of its ascent.

HIS PLANS NOT FEASIBLE.

Prof. Parker reports that he was a partner with Dr. Cook in the McKinley expedition, both physically and financially, Dr. Cook assumed the lead with a plan which proved unfeasible, and the party escaped with their lives, thanks to the local knowledge of Belmore Brown, one of its members. "It was perfectly understood," says Prof. Parker, "that after the misadventure all further attempts were abandoned for the season." Otherwise Prof. Parker would not have left the expedition.

Instead of this, Dr. Cook, it is charged, sidetracked all members of the expedition until there remained only himself, his guide, Barrill, and one packer, who was subsequently got rid of also. These defections left Dr. Cook, says Prof. Parker, no instruments capable of measuring the altitudes he says he attained. Moreover, he adds, the summer's experience had shown that of all the party Dr. Cook and Barrill were the least fitted physically for arduous mountain climbing.

Belmore Brown, in the main, confirms Prof. Parker, and says also that in Dr. Cook's book there is not one date given from the time he left the Chulitna River. This makes intelligent criticism impossible, he declares. Brown asserts further that he never saw Dr. Cook make a single aneroid barometer reading during the whole trip. Confirming a charge that has previously been made, he says that Dr. Cook was known to be in serious financial straits, and would have had great difficulty in getting out of Alaska if he had not reported that he attained the summit of Mount McKinley.

DECLARES PICTURES FAKES.

Brown fortifies his charges with the declaration that Cook and Barrill had no ice creepers, and that, though Dr. Cook afterwards told Prof. Parker that he and Barrill were roped together every foot of the last stages, Prof. Parker and Brown both remembered that they destroyed the climbing rope as defective before they quit the expedition.

Furthermore, in none of the pictures published in Dr. Cook's book does a climbing rope appear. Brown and Sheldon also report that various photographs in Dr. Cook's book do not represent the peaks they are said to picture; while Sheldon, denies that he is the author of the appendix C in the book which Dr. Cook credits to him.

The committee as a whole, therefore, concludes in part that—

"Dr. Cook's account of the ascent is not only such as to be unconvincing to the experienced mountaineer, but that *under analysis it becomes incredible*.

"That he entered into a secret financial agreement with a publisher which resulted in embarrassment to his associates.

"That he broke his agreement with his fellow club members to supply his original photographs and data upon which his book was based.

DESCRIBES ANOTHER RIDGE.

"That the evidence before the committee is to the effect that it would be utterly impossible to ascend the glaciers and frozen snow slopes wearing the rubber shoepacks which Dr. Cook states in his book he wore while making the ascent.

"That Dr. Cook's description of the ascent of Mount McKinley on the northeast ridge, which is the ridge by which he claimed to have reached the peak, is in reality, a description of the southeast ridge. The former ridge was

explored by him on a previous expedition and in his book he declares it impossible as a route to the peak.”

**Prof. Parker, of Columbia University, Photographs Dr.
Cook’s Peak Many Miles from Mount McKinley.**

It will be remembered that upon Dr. Cook’s return from the Arctic regions in 1909 the guide whom he alleged went to the top of Mount McKinley with him announced that they never had been to the summit and that the picture Dr. Cook took with this guide holding a flag on the top was miles from the peak. Dr. Cook, with respect to this, asserted that this was merely a plot of Admiral Peary to ruin him. Anyone, however, who takes the trouble to examine the newspaper files of that period can readily ascertain for himself that this guide repudiated Cook’s claim before it was even known that Peary had reached the North Pole, for at the time he had not yet been even heard from. This guide subsequently drew a map upon which he located the peak which was photographed as the summit of Mount McKinley.

Prof. Parker, of Columbia University, subsequently took this map to Alaska in an effort to locate this fake peak.

The following newspaper clipping sets forth his report upon the subject:

PROF. PARKER LAYS BARE MOUNT MCKINLEY FAKE OF DR. COOK—MAKES A
DUPLICATE PHOTOGRAPH OF HIS FAMOUS “TOP OF THE CONTINENT” AT AN ELEVATION OF
ONLY 5,000 FEET AND 20 MILES AWAY FROM THE BASE OF THE GIANT ALASKAN PEAK—
EXPOSURE BY EDWARD BARRILL IS COMPLETELY CORROBORATED—WITH MAP MADE BY
FORMER GUIDE AND DR. COOK’S OWN PHOTOGRAPH NOTED EXPLORER AND MOUNTAIN
CLIMBER HAS NO TROUBLE IN LOCATING THE SPOT.

Indisputable evidence of the falsity of Dr. Frederick A. Cook’s claim to having ascended to the top of Mount McKinley, the highest peak in North America, is furnished by Prof. Herschal C. Parker, of Columbia University, who has just returned to New York City from his latest trip to Alaska. Prof. Parker undertook the journey during the past summer to settle once and for all time the question of Dr. Cook’s veracity as to the Mount McKinley episode, and the proofs he has brought back with him show beyond a shadow of a doubt that the man who failed miserably in his attempt to rob Capt. Robert E. Peary of the credit of having discovered the North Pole was 20 miles away in an air line from the “Top of the Continent” at the time he claims to have stood on the utmost height of the snow-capped peak.

The most important piece of evidence obtained by Prof. Parker, and which not even the most ardent supporter of Dr. Cook can question, if there be any left who still believe in him, is a duplicate photograph of Dr. Cook’s Top of the Continent, or, as he was pleased to also term it, the ultima thule of his ambition. * * *

The most cursory examination of the two pictures will show that they are photographs of the same rock, while a tracing of the outlines of each leaves no doubt of it.

Archdeacon Stuck, of Alaska, Exposes Dr. Cook.

The Rev. Dr. Hudson Stuck, archdeacon of the Yukon, in 1913 made the first accepted ascent of the summit. In his book upon the subject, published by Scribners in 1914, after tracing Dr. Cook’s account of his alleged trip with the packer Barrille to a point on a glacier several miles from Mount McKinley, then asserted:

From this point “up and up to the heaven-scraped granite of the top” Dr. Cook grows grandiloquent and vague, for at this point his true narrative ends.

The claims that Dr. Cook made on his return are well known, but it is quite impossible to follow his course from the description given in his book, *To the Top of the Continent*.

Dr. Cook talks “about the heaven-scraped granite of the top” and “the dazzling whiteness of the frosted granite

blocks” and prints a photograph of the top showing granite slabs. There is no rock of any kind on the south (the higher) peak above 19,000 feet. The last 1,500 feet of the mountain is all permanent snow and ice: nor is the conformation of the summit in the least like the photograph printed as “the top of Mount McKinley.”

But it is not worth while to pursue the subject further. The present writer feels confident that any man who climbs to the top of Denali (Mount McKinley) and then reads Dr. Cook’s account of his ascent will not need Edward Barrille’s affidavit to convince him that Cook’s narrative is untrue. Indignation is, however, swallowed up in pity when one thinks upon the really excellent pioneering and exploring work done by this man and realizes that the immediate success of the imposition about the ascent of Denali (Mount McKinley) doubtless led to the more audacious imposition about the discovery of the North Pole and that to his discredit and downfall.

Dr. Cook’s Present Methods.

It is said in a recent St. Louis newspaper, reporting an interview with Dr. Cook, that he says he has” made about \$10,000 a year out of his lectures and his writings.”

This same newspaper gives us the interesting information that during his campaign he has obtained “90,000 signatures, which, attached to a petition, have been forwarded to Washington,” and we may assume that as long as Dr. Cook can find a market for his wares by his present methods he will continue them, and I presume Congress can stand being deluged with these petitions from people who do not have the facts except as presented to them by Dr. Cook and his coadjutors, and who have no knowledge of Arctic conditions, but who seem to think that Members of Congress are more competent to deal with them than the scientific experts who have already passed upon them.

The Stand of Admiral Peary.

Admiral Peary’s stand, persisted in through many years, not to demean himself by any controversy with Dr. Cook, is one which must receive the hearty approval of all right-thinking Americans. A few, perhaps, not knowing the character of Dr. Cook’s propaganda, do not understand that no self-respecting man could stoop to engage in such a controversy. This phase is well summed up in an editorial in the Omaha World-Herald which I will quote:

“They must either admit the charges or put me in jail,” says Cook and in the saying discloses his motive. It is not only the besailing of his successful rival that he seeks; it is continued publicity—publicity no matter how unenviable, so it may prolong his earning capacity on the vaudeville stage.

As a matter of fact, of course, “they” need do neither the one nor the other. For the sake of the national sense of self-respect it is to be hoped that “they” will leave the worm-eaten Cook severely alone, and that decent newspapers will soon come to the stage where they will refuse to print his villainous slanders, which are an affront not only to Peary but to the United States.

The Buffalo Evening News also expresses much the same thought in the following editorial—and I lay particular emphasis upon the paragraph which I have italicized:

One would think that when a man has been, by his own acts of folly and deception, utterly discredited and held in disgrace by his own countrymen, who are, frankly ashamed of him, he would shut up, keep out of the way, nor dare to appear in any public capacity. Yet Dr. Frederick Cook, the archfaker among Arctic explorers and climbers of Mount McKinley, has nerve enough to erupt again. * * *

Such charges, emanating from such a source, can do no harm to the distinguished explorer whose claims as the discoverer of the North Pole have been passed upon and verified by the leading scientific societies of the world,

*and who, for the glory he won for the American flag by his courage and perseverance, has been fittingly rewarded by Congress. * * **

It is a shameful and disgusting exhibition, and Dr. Cook's appearance on the Chautauqua platform is likely to cast discredit on the whole Chautauqua idea.

The Lowering of the Standard of the Chautauqua Platform.

As the president of a Chautauqua I must severely condemn the perversion of the Chautauqua idea and commend the expression of opinion in the last paragraph above quoted.

The Philadelphia Public Ledger has recently expressed a somewhat similar thought in an editorial which I quote:

Throughout certain western Chautauqua circles, wherein the name but not the nobility of the parent institution is used as a cloak for circus methods in education, Dr. Cook has been eminently successful; but this will not change the universal verdict of America and of the whole world. Let us have an end of any further Cook Polar claims.

It also says:

Back of the recent action of the Committee on Education of the House of Representatives, in dropping further consideration of what is known as the "Cook-Peary controversy," lies a long and sordid story, discreditable in all its aspects. A group of people, some of them innocent and misled and others not classifiable in polite terms, have been busily engaged in trying to filch from Peary the credit due him as discoverer of the North Pole in the interests of Dr. Cook.

Most Americans supposed that the Cook issue died a natural death years ago.

The time will undoubtedly come when Chautauqua managers will be thoroughly conversant with the activities of this man and the press of the country will ultimately do its part against the circulation of perversions of history with respect to *the great feat that Admiral Peary achieved, an honor of which through all future ages no nation can rob us.*

The glory that is ours as a nation has been feelingly portrayed in the following lines from the pen of Leigh Mitchell Hodges, entitled "The Flag that Tops the World":

You may sing a song of banners that are brave against the breeze,

Of flags that ne'er in time of need are furl'd;

You may boast the battle ensigns that have swept the seven seas,

But I toast the starry flag that tops the world!

Where the purple cold eternal

Seals the doom of all things vernal,

It is blooming with the beauty of a cause that can not die;

Where the wind is Death in motion

Flying o'er a frozen ocean,

It is smiling at the outer worlds against the frozen sky.

And the pole that bears the blossom of the old Red, White, and Blue,

Is the axis of the ball on which we're whirl'd;

O, it's fine to see her floating from the rod that holds us true!

So uncover to the flag that tops the world!

*'Round its base the hosts of nations
Through all coming generations
Will be circling in the life march till the spear of Time is hurl'd,
And by land or water faring
Not a man can get his bearing
Till his compass needle points him to the flag that tops the world!*

The Last Phase.

Every true American educator must resent the recent efforts to poison the minds of the children of this country with respect to the discovery of the North Pole. Many newspapers seem to have been misled and have fallen into the trap of offering Dr. Cook's book as prizes for essays from the children upon the subject of the priority of the discovery of the North Pole, and then, while the children were in the act of writing such essays, printing a mass of material furnished by Dr. Cook and giving a wholly distorted idea of the facts, yet in such a subtle way as to give the impression of fairness.

To the honor of the editor of the Quincy (Ill.) Whig let it be said that he exposed a similar plot in his issue of February 4, 1915. I quote from his editorial upon the subject as follows, which is entitled "Press Agenting";

A day or two ago a smooth-talking stranger stepped into the office of Superintendent of Schools Bauman, and after remarking about the weather, the beauty of Quincy, and the high standard maintained by the Gem City's school system declared that he was much interested in polar explorations and would like very much if it might be arranged to give a series of talks on geographical conditions in the far north in the local schools. He carried some testimonials and got by with his request.

Scene No.2 reveals the Orpheum Theater announcing that Dr. Cook, the discovered discoverer of the North Pole, would appear at the Orpheum some time soon.

Scene No.3 discloses an afternoon newspaper announcing that it will give away free Orpheum tickets and a batch of Doc Cook's books to the school child who writes the best essay on "Who discovered the North Pole"

Scene No.4 takes Mr. Baker into a number of grades and the high-school assembly not as a lecturer on geographical conditions in the far North, but as the advertising agent of the afternoon paper and the Orpheum Theater.

Mr. Baker made no "bones" in local newspaper offices as to who he was. The editor of the Whig has plenty of his literature, signed "Personal representative of Dr. Cook" but the Whig refuses to fall for the press-agent stunt which Mr. Baker sought to pull.

In justice to Mr. Bauman it should be said that Mr. Baker kept him in absolute ignorance of his real mission here, never mentioning his real mission nor his connection with Dr. Cook. And should Mr. Baker hereafter attempt to set foot inside a schoolhouse where the superintendent chanced to be it is more than an even bet that he would never make a talk. * * *

The Whig believes that the people of Quincy and school patrons should know just what manner of press agenting has been "pulled" on them.

The fact is that Doc Cook is just a plain notoriety seeker, now making his living on the vaudeville circuits. * * * His press-agenting stunt, however, is a good one and indicates the cleverness of the chap who once was hailed as the greatest man of his time and not the greatest faker. That the public generally and reputable newspapers will fall for "Mr. Baker" is just another evidence, however, that the American public likes to be gulled.

Further comment upon such activities is unnecessary. I would not close the door of investigation even

to Dr. Cook, but he is not entitled to one in any direction until he acts in a manner that accords with his pretensions. If he has any bona fide claims there is but one honest course for him to pursue. Let him in a straightforward manner submit them to the forum he himself selected, the University of Copenhagen, or lay them before the American organizations of scientific experts which have expelled him from membership and secure reinstatement. Until he has done so and removed the stigma which rests upon him as a result of his expulsion from the organizations of American explorers and experts upon Arctic conditions he should not, through a lobby, press his claims upon the attention of Congressmen, who know little if anything of polar research and less of the scientific observations necessary to prove them.

That a group of Congressmen, such as the Committee on Education upon which I serve, are more capable of determining the contentions of this man than the distinguished scientists who have already passed upon them is both amusing and ridiculous. All will admit that such a committee could further the advertising scheme of the lecturer, but no one will contend that any committee of Congress should be a party to such an enterprise. Neither should this body be a party in furthering this latest propaganda among the school children of the country.

NOTE. —As this pamphlet goes to press the New York World, Philadelphia Public Ledger, and other newspapers of March 7 in dispatches from Palm Beach, Fla., announce that at a raid upon the Beach Club there, made by directions of the governor of Florida in efforts to break up gambling, its alleged proprietors, John R. Bradley and his brother, were arrested and held in \$5,000 bail. John R. Bradley, it will be remembered, was the financial backer of Dr. Cook on his alleged North Pole quest, and it was with him on his yacht, the *John R. Bradley*, that Dr. Cook went north.

END

About this reproduction

You may notice certain words hyphenated in this document, such as to-day, that are no longer hyphenated today. Similarly we have left untouched a few misspellings such as the occasional ending “e” in Barrill’s name that occurs only after several correct spellings.

Fess speech—vs.—correct use today

equipments instead of equipment
charlatanary instead of charlatanry
to-day instead of today
laid instead of lay
which instead of that
worth while instead of worthwhile
indorser instead of endorser
December, 1913,...instead of December 1913,...
glamor instead of glamour
true hearted instead of truehearted
venturers instead of (adventurers?)
Barrille instead of Barrill
can not instead of cannot
who instead of whom

Etc.