

Private and confidential

Lysaker, Dec. 29th, 1927.

My dear Mill,

It was indeed delightful to hear from you again, it seems such a very long time since I saw you and I have often thought of writing to you, as it seems to me several things do not go as might be most desirable.

I am also much distressed about the Amundsen affair, and I am afraid that it may do much harm in several respects. Of course I do not blame the R.G.S. a bit, I think its attitude is quite natural; though it would have been better perhaps if the whole thing could have been passed in silence. I do not understand Amundsens conduct on the whole lately, there are several queer things which have happened, and the only explanation I can find is that something has gone wrong with him. There have been similar things once or twice before; but now my impression is that he has entirely lost his balance, and that he is no more quite responsible for his actions. Mind you, I have not seen him, for a year, or more, and have not read his book about himself and all his wrongs etc (nor will read it); but I think there are various unmistakable signs of some kind of insanity. But as long as this is not known or acknowledged, Amundsens conduct will of course continue to do much harm. And I really do not know what to do with it. You see, England is not the only country he has offended, but Unites States also (besides Germany and Italy). His offensive conduct towards you and R.G.S. I mind however most.

Of course, I can find nothing offensive in Curzons remarks and I am sure they were never intended to be, on the contrary. But fanc even if they had, what does it matter? a sane person could not possibly think of and remember such a thing for so many years, and the dig it up again, only to make himself small.

I think I have had some evidence and experience as to the ability of your people to appreciate the achievements of "foreigners" as much as those of your own people. In fact I never felt that I was a "foreigner" in England or Scotland. I think the only thing to do with Amundsen is to try to forget the whole affair as soon as possible. I can see nothing else to do. I believe it is no good to speak to him. I am glad to read what you say about your new president, that he will develop the Soc. on the side of Geophysics.