

CORRESPONDENCE.

Bernhard Hantzsch—A Personal Note.

Editor of 'The Auk'

To the excellent article on the Arctic work of Bernhard Hantzsch, which Mr. Rudolph Martin Anderson contributed to 'The Auk' of October, 1928, may I add a word of personal recollection. I think it was in the summer of 1908, after his return from his fruitful journey to Labrador and when the plans for his great sojourn in the Arctic were seething in his mind, that he visited the Royal Scottish Museum. He came particularly to see the bird collections, but he was interested in many other things, and I had the great pleasure of spending a happy day in his company in the Museum and the city. My impression also is that he paid us a short call again in July, 1909, on his way to Dundee, whence he set out on that fateful voyage from which he was never to return.

However they may have confused dates, the twenty years that have passed have not obliterated the clear picture Hantzsch left upon my mind. He was short in stature and slender in build, clad in a dark suit which accentuated the thinness of his face and his colorless complexion. His clothes were smartly cut, and gave the proper impression of the quick alert mind which animated the body they covered. He spoke English well and was very particular about the pronunciation of his own name. But the dominating impression is one of alertness and enthusiasm. He talked with rare interest of the plans for his great Arctic expedition, of how he proposed to live with the Eskimos so that he might gather the intimacy of their language, and thus gain new insight into their traditions and folklore.

Although he kept in clear view the possibilities of natural history observation and collecting, his ideas revolved about the ethnographical results which he might be able to achieve. None knew better than he, the discomfort and hardships which the course he proposed to follow was sure to entail, but he looked forward with single-mindedness to the gains which he hoped would accrue to science through his self-sacrifice. We bade him good bye and God speed, wondering that so delicate a body should plot so rough and hazardous a journey, and little dreaming that before the journey was over he should make the final sacrifice to his love of knowledge.

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