

The mutton is more doubtful. It was killed inside the Antarctic circle, but I am not sure that the meat was wholly above suspicion of taint; as the sun may have raised the darker portions of the carcasses above the freezing-point; but it is to be remembered that though we ate very heartily of it, we only enjoyed this luxury once a week.

The grave suspicion naturally rests on the tinned meats, and therefore it becomes necessary to examine a little more closely into them. In nine cases out of ten our solid food on ordinary 'tinned meat' days consisted of plain tinned beef or mutton made up into some dish on board. It was the rarest thing for us to open tins containing made-up dishes, mainly because these were part of the consignment which I mentioned as being unsatisfactory. Without exception the plain beef and mutton came from Australian and New Zealand firms, and I have no doubt that it was as good as such things can be; the excellent state of preservation of that which we brought back is alone sufficient to prove this. I cannot think, therefore, that we have a right to suspect these tinned meats. In considering all facts in connection with this elusive disease, it must not be forgotten also that we regularly opened tins of milk and less regularly other 'kickshaws' in which it may have been hidden; but as we continued this practice during our second winter, without ill result, it is reasonable to consider that its effect may be discounted.

The main fact, however, that makes it so difficult to trace our scurvy to faulty provisions is that not a single tin of any sort or description was served out in the 'Discovery' until it had been opened and examined by one of the doctors, and in this respect no risks were taken. The least suspicion was sufficient to ensue rejection, and therefore it is certain that no food which bore any outward sign of being unsafe was ever consumed in the ship.

It has been pointed out that scurvy depends largely on environment, and there can be no doubt that severe or insanitary conditions of life contribute to the ravages of the disease. Indeed, we saw how this might be from the outbreak