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GEOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT.

Increased Staff Required.

The Government Geologist (Mr. H. Y. L. Brown) has done valuable work in preparing a general geological map of South Australia, but there has been no detail work accomplished such as has been done in the other States. Ministers freely recognised that the omission has been due to the department being undermanned. Mr. Brown has been head of the office, clerk, and office boy practically the whole time, and for years everything was undertaken by him. It has been impossible for him, engaged as he has been, on long trips to report on goldfields or water supplies, to prepare maps. Recently an assistant Government Geologist was appointed, but Dr. Basedow soon resigned. The members of the University staff recognise the importance of a detailed geological map of South Australia, and at the invitation of the Treasurer (Hon. C. Vaughan) several of the professors met him on Monday morning, and discussed the subject with him. Professors Stirling, Rennie, and Chapman, and Mr. Howchin urged that in the rearrangement of the department, following upon the retirement of Mr. Brown, consideration should be given to the fact that the office was seriously undermanned. They pointed out that the detailed geological surveys of South Australia were not by any means equal to those of the other States, and suggested that, in addition to Mr. Brown's successor, an assistant Government Geologist should be appointed, and a complete geological survey of the country made. The Treasurer said he was pleased to receive the suggestions, and the Government would give them every consideration.

DR. MAWSON'S RETURN.

Another £20,000 Required.

FREMANTLE, July 18.

Dr. Mawson, who will lead the Australian Antarctic Expedition, is returning by the Morea, which arrived this morning. In an interview, he said he was greatly disappointed, on arrival in England, to hear that the Commonwealth Government had deferred taking part in the expense for this great national undertaking until the return of the Ministers from the Coronation. Personally, he thought that the extreme value of the work would appeal to the Government of Australia. The whole of the objects were to advance Australian science and Australian commercial enterprise. English scientific circles were keen about it. "The Royal Geographical Society donated £500," he continued, "and genuine sympathy was accorded me in all quarters, especially from Australians in London. Lord Stratheona gave me £1,000. Lord Denman (Governor-General Designate) did much towards making the project known, and gave personal appearance. Lord Denman privately asked the British Government for £2,000 to complete the purchase of the Antarctic vessel Aurora, and this was granted the same afternoon. At present there is somewhat of an overdraft. The main cost of the expedition has been broken down, but the expense of keeping the Aurora in commission with a large body of men attached is considerable. However, I hope that with the assistance of the various energetic committees in the eastern States, money will be obtained. The Aurora is a fine vessel, of 700 tons, and her master is Capt. J. Davies, who commanded Sir Ernest Shackleton's vessel Nimrod. She will reach Hobart direct from South African ports, and after she has taken us to the antarctic, will return to Fremantle about the end of March, 1912. She will not be idle, but will be engaged in dredging and oceanograph work in the seas between the antarctic land and Hobart. So far £20,000 has been collected, represented by cash and material for the expedition. At least £40,000 will be required, so that you can see we will have to go 'some.' Nearly every manufacturing firm in England gave an enormous supply of material. About £1,000 worth of stores has thus been presented by British firms. I would like the people of Australia to realize the commercial aspect of the successful exploration of the antarctic. There is a tremendous amount of profit to be made out of the sealskin and whale oil industry, provided harbours are found and places for ships. In the South Orkney Islands, on the other side of the coast line of the antarctic, there are five whaling firms, which have been there for some years. Last year they reaped a profit of 75 per cent. There is no reason why Australia should not participate in some of this lucrative undertaking. The antarctic coast is simply teeming with whales. Then there is the possibility of minerals in the antarctic. I hope to receive some assistance from Australian manufacturing firms and to receive free gifts of coal. So far the only Australian money received is £4,500 from Sydney, £1,000 from Melbourne, and £2,000 from South Australia. These amounts are approximate."

THE EDUCATION BILL.

If the scope of the Royal Commission on Higher Education is to be enlarged, as proposed by Mr. Ryan, so as to include an enquiry into education generally, the Government would do well to adopt the suggestion of the chairman of the Commission, and postpone the discussion of the new Education Bill until the investigation has been completed and the report issued. A decidedly anomalous position would be created if legislation on any matter were to precede enquiry already authorised by Parliament. It may, of course, be doubted whether the suggested extension of the Commission's terms of reference would serve any really necessary purpose. An enormous mass of information has been gathered during the last few years respecting education in all the leading

countries of the world. The Director during his visit to Europe and America ascertained what is being done in the principal educational countries, and the information he collected has to a large extent been made available to legislators and the public, while other sources of enlightenment are innumerable. The Education Bill was introduced into the Assembly near the end of last session. Its importance was at once recognised to be exceedingly great, and a prudent course was adopted when it was determined to hold over consideration of its provisions so that members might have time to give deliberate thought to the new features presented by the measure. It is to be hoped that the Government have in the meantime realised the necessity for some modifications. The State has entered upon a period of progress in respect to primary and secondary schools. Indeed, it may fairly be claimed that at present South Australia is in the front rank of the States of the Commonwealth. This was admitted by visitors from other parts of Australia to the recent Teachers' Conference. The forward movement has thus far been on well-considered lines, but there is a danger in attempting to force the pace and incurring an expenditure beyond the resources of a comparatively small population. Much better would it be to continue the policy of steady progress which has already produced excellent results.

A duty admittedly rests on the Government of any civilised State to make such provision for the education of the young as the conditions of the age and country render essential for the advancement of the physical, intellectual, and moral well-being of the people, and reasonable means should be employed to ensure that the advantage of such training is extended to every child capable of receiving it. Outlying districts must be catered for with no less care than more populous centres. The Bill, as introduced last session, stipulates that a primary school shall not be established unless there is satisfactory evidence that there will be an average attendance of not fewer than ten children between the ages of five and fourteen years. It is, however, provided that the Minister may appoint itinerant teachers, establish assisted or half-time schools, or grant assistance to other schools, "not being sectarian or denominational schools," in "districts where it is not practicable for him to establish schools with an annual average attendance of not less than ten children" between the ages mentioned. No fault will be found with the Legislature for making the provision for instruction of children in the scattered or newly-opened portions of the State as liberal as circumstances will allow. The community owes much to the pioneers who go far afield and bring new areas under cultivation, and it is widely recognised that the children of such settlers should not pay the penalty of ignorance for the enterprise of their parents. One of the most contentious provisions of the Bill in its original form was that relating to compulsory attendance at schools. The general principle of enforcing the policy of universal education is no

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University Sports Oval.

The markets and parks committee reported to the Adelaide City Council on Monday that the University Sports Association had made an application for more space at the south end of the sports oval on account of the close proximity of the fence and the damage done to the hedge. The committee had recommended that the arena be lengthened by about 23 ft. and also made wider. It was mentioned that the University Sports' Association desired over 30 ft. of land instead of 23 ft., and the matter was referred back to the committee to allow members of the council to visit the oval.

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THE PRIMARY EXAMINATIONS.

The examination period of the University academic year begins in August, when candidates for primary honors and passes are subjected to the tests which are provided in the statute. The lists for the forthcoming examinations have closed, and the examiners will have the arduous task of going through the papers of about 1,200 children, of whom approximately 650 are natives of this State and 650 residents in Western Australia, which State is working conjointly with the Adelaide University in examination matters until the new institution is brought into existence in the western capital. Comparatively speaking, Western Australia is sending up more candidates than South Australia, but the number of boys and girls who sit for examinations in this State which correspond in importance with the University series, although not conducted under the auspices of that institution, is much greater than the total quoted. Hundreds of children who otherwise would present themselves at the University now devote their time to the study of subjects embodied in the tests which have to be passed before candidates can enter the

mentary, naval, railway, Federal, and other services, while the commercial course has drawn many from the primary ranks. The time-table for the August examinations has been fixed as follows:—Tuesday, August 22, 9.30 a.m., algebra; 11.30 a.m., Latin; 2.30 p.m., history. Wednesday, 10 a.m., arithmetic; 2 p.m., English. Thursday, 9.30 a.m., geometry; 1 p.m., geography; 3 p.m., French. Friday, 9.30 a.m., German; 11.30 a.m., Greek; 2 p.m., 1st grade plane geometry; 3.30 p.m., 1st grade freehand. It will be noticed that four consecutive days have been set aside for the work, and it is anticipated that the examiners will be able to complete the task within that period. The scrutiny of the papers will occupy about a month, and it is expected that the results will be made available during the first week in October.