

Register, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 1911. Register, Oct. 30/11.

Advertiser, Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup> 1911

### CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS.

#### Government Geologist and His Assistant.

##### A Straightout Criticism.

A South Australian born and bred, connected with one of the high educational institutions, who with others strongly resents the method of appointment to several important positions in the Civil Service recently, volunteered the following statement to a representative of The Register on Sunday afternoon:—"There have been several appointments made in this State of late years which have given offence to many South Australians who would have worthily filled the positions. Outsiders have been chosen, sometimes with unhappy results. Appointments have been made, and the first notification has been a paragraph in the daily newspapers. How much longer are South Australians going to take their gruel lying down? We want a few more outspoken men in the service like Mr. Jordan, of the Education Department, but it is not in connection with the appointments in the Education Department of which I wish to speak. Two important appointments, those of Government Geologist and Assistant Government Geologist, are to be made in a few days. For the latter position several capable South Australians are offering their services. If one of them is not chosen it will be a standing disgrace to the Government in power to-day.

##### -The University Consulted.-

"A press notice appeared a few days ago stating that the professors of the Adelaide University are to be asked to make the choice for the Ministry. Of course Mr. Howchin, lecturer in geology at the Varsity, will have most to say in the matter. Why have these men been chosen? Why should the Varsity meddle with Government appointments? Were they asked to express an opinion when Professor Lowrie was re-appointed Professor of Agriculture in South Australia? Did the Minister of Agriculture consult the Varsity when Mr. Batchelor was appointed editor of the Agricultural Journal? Was it consulted when Mr. Williams was made Director of Education in South Australia? Was Mr. Jordan appointed at the wish of the Varsity? Will Professor Lowrie consult with the Varsity staff when he has to choose the successor to Mr. Richardson, who will take charge of Parafield Experimental Station? The professor knows his business too well to allow others to meddle in his affairs.

##### -South Australians Not Applying.-

"I know of several worthy South Australians who absolutely refuse to apply for either the position of Government Geologist or Acting Government Geologist because they contend they would not get fair treatment. It is freely mooted that a certain professor was moving in the direction of having a person appointed Acting Government Geologist until the return of Dr. Mawson from Antarctica, when the doctor would receive the appointment. We don't question Dr. Mawson's qualifications, but I do say there are men equally capable in South Australia who refused to apply because the recommendation to the position would come from the Varsity. The public may not know that every appointment to the geological staff at the Adelaide Varsity since the death of Professor Tate has been given to Sydney Varsity students. I, of course, except Mr. Howchin, who was appointed lecturer in geology at the instigation of the Chancellor. The following gentlemen from Sydney have held appointments as lecturers in mineralogy and petrology at the Varsity—Dr. Woolnough, Dr. Mawson, Mr. Benson, and Mr. Mahoney, who is at present locum tenens for Dr. Mawson. Why were the men brought over from Sydney? Were there none in Adelaide who could have done the work? If not, is it not a reflection on the teaching of geology at the Adelaide Varsity. Is it true that the teaching of geology is more thoroughly done at Sydney than in Adelaide. If so, who is at fault? It might also interest the public to know why Mr. Brown somewhat hastily resigned his position as Government Geologist. Will the Premier enlighten us? Is it not a fact that he resented a certain appointment made without his recommendations? I could go on enumerating quite a number of acts that require ventilation.

##### -A Select Committee Asked For.-

"I hope some member of the Legislature will move that a select committee be appointed to investigate the workings of the Mines Department. A very great deal of interesting evidence would be forthcoming—evidence quite as sensational as that tendered by Mr. Jordan a few days ago. A list of applicants for the position of Government Geologist would prove interesting to the public."

### THE GOVERNMENT GEOLOGIST.

From "Not a Politician":—"With respect to the appointment of a Government geologist the Treasurer has made no mention of seeking Mr. Brown's advice in the selection of his successor, though Mr. Brown has for years been the chief geological adviser of the Ministries of the State. The University authorities have been asked to advise the Government. Recent correspondence in The Register on matters geological and otherwise has shown that the scientific staff of the University is far from unbiassed with regard to a certain candidate for the position. The representative of the Ministry in the Legislative Council stated that the Treasurer was by no means satisfied with Dr. Basedow's work as Assistant Geologist. Whence this happy inspiration that is in discordance with previous utterances on the same subject, and that allows an easy answer on the Treasurer's part to a somewhat difficult question? It was only fair to Dr. Basedow that the intended snub should have consisted of a specific statement, and not a generality that carries the face value of fictitiousness."

Register, Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup> /11

### THE GOVERNMENT GEOLOGIST.

From W. Wastell:—"The Ministry, in connection with the appointment of the new Government Geologist and his assistant, have informed the public that the University has been asked to select the men; but why, we are not told. As a citizen of Adelaide, who has frequently come into contact with the Civil Service and its methods, I ask why Mr. Vaughan has resorted to this roundabout method of procedure? Would he have done so if the University Geologist had been supported by Dr. Basedow in his hypothetical glacial views? If it was necessary, why did he not refer the matter to an obviously unbiased authority, such as Australia's leading economic geologist (Mr. Gibb Maitland)? Mr. Maitland would not have hesitated long in deciding who, in fairness to the State and Australia, was the man. On other occasions the Ministries have never hesitated to ask the advice of Mr. T. Gill, I.S.O. (Under Treasurer). This honoured, level-headed, and broadminded civil servant has been their right hand for many years, and has on more than one occasion helped them out of a difficulty. Why was he not consulted this time? How is it, too, that Mr. H. Y. L. Brown has to submit to the University authorities selecting his successor for him? He should have insisted on his dues, and these could not have been refused him by the Minister so long as he is still Government Geologist. But has not Mr. Brown, too, already, in a letter which has become public property, selected his successor? A few weeks ago I happened to pass through the Government offices, and for curiosity's sake asked one of the departmental heads who would select the candidate for the position of Government Geologist. The reply given to me was that no doubt the Minister would do as is usually done—that is, refer to a board, which would include the Government Geologist (Mr. Brown), as one, and no doubt Mr. T. Duffield (Secretary of Mines), Mr. T. Gill (Under Treasurer), and Mr. Sholl (Under Secretary). I left the offices quite satisfied. This sudden, unjust, and unpardonable action has therefore surprised a whole community, of which mine is only one tongue."

Register, Nov. 2/11

### GOVERNMENT GEOLOGIST.

The Treasurer (Hon. C. Vaughan) was questioned on Wednesday concerning the appointment of a successor to the Government Geologist (Mr. H. Y. L. Brown), who will leave the service at the end of the present month. Mr. Vaughan stated that the applications had been sent to the University authorities for consideration and a recommendation. No reply had been received.

### GEOLOGICAL OFFICE APPOINTMENT.

The TREASURER, in reply to Mr. Ryan, said he hoped to be in a position to put the recommendations for the appointment of a Government Geologist and an Assistant Geologist before Cabinet on Monday next.

Just notice.

Register, Oct. 25/11

### NEW GOVERNMENT GEOLOGIST.

The Treasurer (Hon. C. Vaughan) remarked on Tuesday morning that the applications received for the position of Government Geologist would be submitted to the University authorities for advice. It was hoped that a decision would be reached early next week. "There is a splendid lot of applicants from most of the States," commented the Treasurer, "and some of the best qualified men in Australia are among them. When the new officer is selected we hope to have a proper geological survey of South Australia made. Geological parties will be equipped for that purpose on the same lines as is done in Victoria. We are now gathering marbles and other ornamental stones from all parts of the State with a view of having a collection."

Register, Oct. 31/11

### THE GOVERNMENT GEOLOGIST.

From "Diogenes":—"The public are much interested in the appointments to be made this week. Perhaps recent criticisms in the press may cause the Government to be specially careful in the final selection. It will be a lasting discredit to our State, and a great injustice to South Australian trained geologists, if they are passed over. The public have great regard for the University, but cannot understand why it should be allowed to meddle in Government matters. True, the Ministry has asked for its help, but why should it have been solicited? Has the Ministry such little faith in its own power that it has to relegate its duties to outsiders? If the Premier has such trust in the professors, why did he not get one to report on the suitability of the Leigh Creek coal for briquette purposes? Is there not one on the staff capable of doing so? Why not have a board of unbiased independent men appointed to make all appointments in the civil service? After the controversy in the press during the last few months the greatest caution should be observed. There should be no suspicion of bias. I hope others will take this matter up and see that fairplay is given to South Australians, be they Irish, Scotch, or German."