

THE CALL OF THE SOUTH.

THE ANTARCTIC EXPEDITIONS.

MR. WILD INTERVIEWED.

Fremantle, September 26.

It is perhaps a happy augury for the success of the first Australian scientific expedition to the Antarctic that one of its members should include a direct descendant of that intrepid explorer, Captain Cook. This is Mr. Frank Wild, who is to have charge of one of the exploring parties. He is proceeding to Sydney by the Macedonia, and, referring to his ancestor, he laughingly claimed that he had a vested right in Australia. Short in stature, but broad in build, Mr. Wild's appearance suggests what he is—a retired petty officer of the Royal Navy. He is well acquainted with the South Polar regions, having been a member of both the Scott and Shackleton expeditions. Just prior to leaving England he and three other companions were enjoying a cruise in the Irish Sea in one of the Nimrod's open boats, when they encountered a heavy gale, which raged helplessly in the storm, Mr. Wild and his companions being drenched. They almost perished with cold. Ultimately they were picked up by a passing steamer, which towed them to the Isle of Man.

Referring to the Scott expedition, Mr. Wild expressed the opinion that, given luck, Captain Scott would achieve his great ambition. "It must not be forgotten," he explained, "that there is a large element of luck in such expeditions. Captain Scott's party has a much better equipment than we had with Shackleton, and he has the benefit of our experience. Captain Amundsen, the Norwegian explorer, is a dangerous rival and I anticipate that there will be a great race between the two parties to gain the coveted honor. I am inclined to favor Captain Scott's chances, however. It was mountainous ranges that crippled us in the last dash for the Pole. We had over 400 miles of terribly hard, dangerous work at the finish, when we were more than 10,000 ft. above the sea level. It is on a huge plateau beyond these ranges, and past Beardmore's Glacier Pole. Two things will probably prove detrimental to Amundsen. Of the two he should travel the faster at first, for his dogs will help him along better than Scott's ponies and motor sledges. When he gets on the glacier, however, Amundsen will find the dogs of no use, for they will not be able to obtain a foothold. No animal but man can work his way over the Beardmore glacier. Another thing in Scott's favor is the greater number of his men. For the first 30 miles after the start Scott will have to cross numbers of crevasses, and it is quite probable that portion of his equipage, if not some of the lives of the men, will be lost in the attempt to cross these dangerous fissures. Personally, I shall be surprised if some of the motor sledge and ponies do not disappear. On the other hand, we don't know what Amundsen will have to encounter on his journey. He may miss the crevasses, or may encounter even worse conditions."

It was during Shackleton's final dash for the Pole that Mr. Wild, who was one of the heroic party of four who penetrated to within a few miles of the Pole, met with a thrilling experience. Every day they had to cross hundreds of crevasses, and it was only by luck that the whole party were not lost. On one occasion one of the ponies suddenly disappeared, and Mr. Wild, who had one of the reins attached to his wrist, was dragged after it. He was left holding on the side of the crevasse with one hand. Fortunately the reins became unfastened and he was rescued.

Speaking of the Mawson expedition, Mr. Wild paid a tribute to Dr. Mawson, who, he said, was a great leader and a fine worker.

THEOLOGICAL CHAIR AT THE UNIVERSITY.

From Professor H. Darnley Naylor:—"It is evident that my point of view has been misunderstood in certain quarters, and the letter of 'Theologian' makes it necessary for me to restate my position. I am advocating a Chair of Theology on broad academic lines, but am strongly of the opinion that such a Chair should be founded by private benefactions—first, because, as I understand, the University has no money, since the £4,000 mentioned by your correspondent was ear-marked for a special purpose—the consolidation of Chairs already existing, and the appointment of further lecturers in the various schools; secondly, because any objection (however ill-founded) that the State was spending money on denominational teaching would at once fall to the ground."

"The Critic, Sep. 12/11

DON'T GO. F. B.

I reckon a jolly big effort ought to be made to keep Mr. Frederick Bevan fastened to the Conservatorium somehow. Don't you? He has won for that institution a prestige it can't very well do without now. Frederick Bevan has done this by the brilliance of his professional gifts and the overflowing geniality of his disposition, and the surpassing tact and courtesy of his administration. Students with voices—and without them—have always been in a hurry to enjoy the tuition of a famous composer, who was a personal friend of the great Sullivan, and is the foremost exponent in Australia of his works. Before Mr. Bevan's voice snapped he was the darling of the choir at quite a number of celebrated churches in England, and was getting encores and fees at 12. Moreover, little Frederick was modest about it, although he was one of the singers who delighted royal audiences when the Duke and Duchess of Fife and the Duke and Duchess of York were made "ones." By hook or by crook we must have a bit of Frederick Bevan at the Conservatorium.

Register, Sep. 2/11

UNIVERSITY ROYAL COMMISSION.

Mr. RYAN moved—"That the first report of the Royal Commission on Adelaide University and higher education be adopted."

The COMMISSIONER of PUBLIC WORKS seconded the motion.

The Hon. A. H. PEAKE did not feel inclined to let this motion go through without something being said in justification. He was rather surprised Mr. Ryan had just formally moved it. (Mr. Ryan—"It is all right. The Government agreed.") He knew that, but he thought the public should be informed why the Commission had brought forward a progress report at this stage. (Mr. Ryan—"A Bill is to be introduced. It will be fully explained then.") There was a good deal that would have justified Mr. Ryan in explaining to the House and the public the reasons which actuated the Commission. The public could not assume, because Mr. Ryan had simply moved the motion, and the Premier had seconded it, that a Bill would be brought in early to give effect to the recommendations. As a member of the Commission, he wished to say he was pleased, as would be every other member

of the Commission, that the Government had agreed to the recommendation that an additional amount should be paid to the University. The members of the Commission had quickly learned by their visits to the other States that the Adelaide University was a long way behind Melbourne and Sydney. If it was to take the rank it should have among Australian universities, if its undergraduate courses were to be as valuable to the students as these in other States, and its degrees of equal status, the University must be brought to a proper standard in regard to endowment. Compared with the Melbourne and Sydney universities, which were wealthy institutions, Adelaide was comparatively poverty stricken. It would be pleasing to the council, and the professors of the University, that the Government had so readily agreed to make the increased grant. In the evidence given before the Commis-

sion it was shown conclusively that in comparison with Melbourne and Sydney the Adelaide professors were poorly paid. They were not so well paid as they should be if the University wished to retain their services or to attract good men. It had been proposed that the Commission should take upon itself the responsibility of saying that the £4,000 should be devoted to the increase of salaries, but it had wisely decided that it was not the province of the Commission to decide what any particular professor was to receive. The University council should say how the money should be expended. A further reason was that as the taxpayer was to be called upon to pay a larger sum, he should have a voice in the management of the institution. The University authorities would be willing to accede to the proposals in that respect. Several projects had been put forward as to how an ideal council should be constituted. Some witnesses had favored and some had objected to the appointment of representative of certain bodies on the council. In the evidence of the Chancellor of the Melbourne University (Sir John Madden) would be found a statement of the objections that could be raised against a council so composed. He said if there were a council composed largely of men who were ex-officio members, and whose qualifications perhaps ran for only a year, they would have a body that would be lacking in sustained interest. But Sir John Madden, as a result of his long experience, had admitted that there was justification in having on the council representatives of the Parliament, which voted large sums of money for the upkeep of the University. If the Minister of Education brought down a Bill to amend the present University Act, and to make this charge of £4,000—which was now only upon the present year's Estimates—a regular charge on the revenue, there was no doubt the proposals would be carried in both Houses, and approved by the people. If the Government would recommend to the University council that there should be three members of the House of Assembly and two members of the Legislative Council, on the University council, such members to be elected at the beginning of each Parliament, he had no doubt that the University would readily agree. (Mr. Ponder—"What proportion is that of the members of the council?") He believed there were 24 members of the council. No one would wish that the whole University council, or even a majority of its members, should be Parliamentary men. He supported the motion, and hoped the Government would soon bring in the Bill, which would give the University £4,000 more a year, which was equal to an endowment of £80,000.

Mr. SMEATON regretted that the main features of the report could not have been made the subject of discussion forthwith.

The report had just been placed on their files, and up to the present hon. members had not had an opportunity to peruse it. They would have to take another occasion for the discussion.

Mr. COOMBE said they were indebted to the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Peake) for a great deal of information on the subject of the report. There was no doubt that the report was of considerable importance, and the House ought to have the fullest opportunity to discuss the proposals. In view of the fact that the Government had determined to bring in a Bill he did not know what good would be done by carrying the motion. If they committed themselves now by the adoption of the report, it might be difficult, later on, to offer criticism of the Bill. The unanimous recommendation of the Commission was a prima facie case for the House, but the proposals were so important that they deserved to be fully discussed.

Mr. RYAN pointed out that the Commission had recommended—(1) That section 15 of the Adelaide University Act, No. 20 of 1874, be amended to provide for an addition of £4,000 to the annual grant of the University. (2) That the Adelaide University Act, No. 20 of 1874, be amended to provide for the addition of five Parliamentary representatives to the Council of the University, three representatives to be chosen by the House of Assembly and two by the Legislative Council at the beginning of each Parliament, and to hold office during the life of that Parliament. In moving the adoption of the report he thought he was following the usual course, and trusted to the generosity of the House to accept the motion. They could have the discussion when the Bills were introduced.

The motion was carried.