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HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION.

MR. TATE EXAMINED.

MELBOURNE, June 20.

Interesting evidence was given to-day by Mr. Frank Tate (Director of Education) before the South Australian Royal Commission on Technical Education, which sat at the Victorian Education Department. Mr. Ryan, M.P., presided. Mr. Tate, replying to questions, gave a history of the movement that led to the passing last session of the Education Act, which provides, among other things, for higher education, and then outlined a scheme of organization necessary to execute the provisions for the evening continuation classes, higher elementary schools, and district high schools. With respect to agricultural high schools, Mr. Tate said the work being done had gained praise from the Scottish Agricultural Commission who visited the Shepparton and Ballarat schools. Dealing with the relationship between the University and the higher branches of the technical schools, he said that a conference would be held in a few days. There would be present representatives of the technical side of the university, Education Department specialists, and science teachers of the chief technical schools; and they would consider whether it would be possible to have such a relationship as would admit of the work done in the technical schools being recognized by the university as part of the university courses. A permanent standing committee, which would deal with the courses of study in the technical schools was, Mr. Tate said, favoured by Mr. Billson (Minister for Education), who also thought that the committee should deal with the classification of the teachers, the appointment of examiners, and the standard of examinations. If efficiency were guaranteed in that way there should be no difficulty, he thought, in obtaining the necessary recognition by the university. Replying to further questions, Mr. Tate said that during the last 10 years the Melbourne University had done much to develop courses extending its usefulness, and had provided special facilities for students nominated by the department. Country teachers were brought to Melbourne for university courses. Satisfaction was expressed by members of the commission at hearing this last statement.

Questioned closely in regard to the scholarship system, Mr. Tate admitted that in the past the emphasis had been laid upon the provision for secondary education. It was intended, however, to make public shortly a comprehensive scheme of scholarships, when it would be found that the department was not unmindful of pupils who wished to take up industrial courses. Speaking for himself only, Mr. Tate said he considered that a boy who gave up two or three years to full courses in preparatory trade or technical schools was as fitting a recipient of a valuable scholarship as a boy who desired to train for a profession. The sacrifices made by the parents of such a boy in maintenance and wages probably justified the award of a substantial scholarship, more than in the case of a boy or girl who attended a secondary school and afterwards went to the university. At present all the technical schools in the State gave a free place for every £100 of Government grant, but an improved scholarship system was urgently necessary.

Dr. Harold Chapple, who has now concluded his successful course at Cambridge University by obtaining the degree of M.C., or Master of Surgery, may be claimed as having conferred honor upon Adelaide, his native town, Prince Alfred College, and the University. Dr. Chapple received the whole of his early education at the college over whose successful career his father has so long presided. He gained the Angas exhibition of his year, and passed to the Adelaide University. There he secured the Degree of Bachelor of Science with honors. He next proceeded to Cambridge, and won a good place in the natural sciences tripos. He turned to the medical course, and at the University and at Guy's Hospital, London, qualified for the M.B. and B.S. degrees, taking on the way the diplomas of M.R.C.S. and L.R.C.P. of London. The F.R.C.S. fol-

lowed, and now the M.C., a high distinction never before gained by an Australian. While an undergraduate Dr. Chapple might have gained a first rank place in athletics, for he represented his University in lacrosse. He was in the first tennis six, second only to Wilding, and he was elected secretary to the cricket eleven. This carries the captaincy of the eleven in the next year without further election, but he saw that holding this post of honor would make such demands upon his time that he reluctantly resigned. Papers he has contributed to the "British Medical Journal," the "Lancet," and the "Practitioner" show that Dr. Chapple has literary ability as well as scientific knowledge.

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DR. MAWSON'S EXPEDITION.

PRINCE OF MONACO CONSULTED.

DEEP-SEA DREDGING.

LONDON, June 18.

Dr. Mawson, who will lead the Australian expedition to the antarctic, has gone to Paris to discuss with the Prince of Monaco the best deep-sea dredging gear to be taken on the expedition. The Prince, who is a noted authority on the subject, and has offered to present the expedition with an outfit, has already arranged for one member of the scientific staff of the party to undergo training at the Oceanographical Laboratory at Monaco.

Dr. Mawson stated that his recently purchased vessel (the Aurora), by which the members will travel to the antarctic regions, has been dry docked. She is a roomy ship, but a little smaller than the Terra Nova.

CAPTAIN AMUNDSEN'S SHIP.

CHRISTIANIA, June 18.

It is stated that Mr. Christoffersen, a wealthy Norwegian resident of Buenos Ayres, will defray the cost of provisions and outfit for Capt. Amundsen's boat, the Fram, until he returns to New Zealand and San Francisco. The vessel is now engaged on a scientific voyage between South America and South Africa.

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ANTARCTIC TRAVEL.

DR. MAWSON IN PARIS.

LONDON, June 19.

Dr. Mawson, who is about to take a scientific expedition to the Antarctic regions, is going to Paris to discuss with the Prince of Monaco, who is a recognised authority on oceanographical subjects, the question of the best deep-sea dredging gear to be employed. The Prince has already arranged that one of the members of Dr. Mawson's scientific staff shall undergo a course of training at the celebrated oceanographical laboratory at Monaco.

Dr. Mawson states that the Aurora, which he recently purchased to carry his expedition to the southern ice, has been dry docked. She is described as a roomy ship, and is only a little smaller than the Terra Nova, in which Captain R. F. Scott went to the Antarctic region last year.

SIR ERNEST SHACKLETON AND DR. MAWSON.

Under the heading of "A Debt of Honor" Sir Ernest Shackleton, the Antarctic explorer, wrote thus to the London "Daily Mail" last month:—"Will you allow me, through your columns, to make an appeal on behalf of the Australasian Antarctic expedition under the command of my old comrade, Dr. Douglas Mawson? Australasia has done much, financially and otherwise, for South Polar expeditions, especially for the expedition commanded by me, and for that which Captain Scott is now leading. Australasia is at this present moment sending out a band of scientific explorers to draw back further the veil that shrouds the greatest unknown area of our world. I appeal for help to assist this object—help from this side of

the Line, and from Australians and New Zealanders who are gathering in London for the Coronation. The object of the Australasian expedition is to increase our knowledge of the Antarctic region, and to chart the 2,500 miles of unknown coast on the north side of Antarctica. This is undoubtedly one of the richest fields of scientific research. And if we turn to the economic side, which also is important in this workaday world, the meteorological work alone will be of the highest value in helping us to arrive at a correct judgment of those weather conditions which have so important a bearing on the prosperity of Australasia. That Dr. Mawson is admirably qualified for the task he has undertaken is well known to men of science. He holds the post of lecturer in economic geology in the University of Adelaide. To his ability as an explorer I can testify. Dr. Mawson is one of the men who have reached the summit of the great active volcano, Mount Erebus. He is also one of the three men who reached for the first time the South Magnetic Pole, and hoisted Queen Alexandra's Union Jack on that hitherto undiscovered spot. This was the greatest unsupported sledge journey ever made in Polar regions, North or South. The Royal Geographical Society has shown its practical sympathy with the Australasian expedition by subscribing £500, as in the case of Captain Scott's expedition. A committee has been formed in Australia to assist the explorers. Dr. Mawson is now negotiating for a suitable ship, and has selected one. The sum of £12,000 is urgently needed to purchase this ship, and to enable the expedition to start in June. I appeal with confidence to the British nation to come to the aid of Australasia in this great enterprise."

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SANCTUARIES FOR BIRDS.

The Commissioner of Crown Lands (Hon. C. Vaughan) is always sympathetic towards any movement for protecting the fauna and flora of the State, and the reply he gave some time ago to a deputation which sought a sanctuary for pelicans embodied a statement that the bird-protection districts should be absolutely inviolate. Those districts are—The Pages, Casuarina Island, the Dangerous Reef Islands, Bushby, Beatrice, and adjoining inlets, situated north-east of Kangaroo Island, islands in Collins Bay, Port Douglas, Dutton Bay, and Kellidie Bay, Lake Barmers, on the River Murray (previously Lake Bonney), Policeman's Point, Pelican Islands, and some other islands on the Coorong. Under the provisions of the Act as it exists, birds are protected all the year round in the bird-protection districts, except those on the third schedule, which are—Crows, sparrows, cormorants (shag), blackbirds, starlings, wattlebirds, silver-eyes, sulphur-crested cockatoos, hawks, snipe, chaffinches, rosella parrots, and goldfinches, and may be killed at any time. Mr. Vaughan has said that the trouble was that sportsmen were in the habit of going to the protected districts for the purpose of killing the unprotected birds, and they "hit by mistake" the birds which the Government were trying to protect. Now, however, there is in course of preparation a short Bill which will amend the Act, and prevent persons going to bird-protection districts with firearms or other weapons for the purpose of shooting any creature at all. It is hoped that the amendments will be carried early in the session, and the provision put into operation soon.