

THE NEWS

ADELAIDE: SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 1931

FINANCE COMMITTEE CAMEL, MOTOR CAR, AND PLANE

Efficient Service to State

How Central Australia Is Explored

PATRIOTIC WORK OF MR. YOUNG

THE grateful thanks of the State—indeed, of the whole Commonwealth—are due to Mr. W. J. Young and his fellow-members of the Advisory Committee on State Finance for the outstanding service they have rendered. Mr. Hill (Premier) and Mr. Butler (Leader of the Opposition) have both paid tributes to the patriotic work of Mr. Young, who has been forced by pressure of business to resign from the chairmanship of the committee. In doing so they have expressed the feeling of the whole community.

As Mr. Young pointed out in his letter of resignation, the main function of the committee was to advise the State Government in regard to the budgetary position. Conditions were such that problems had arisen far too complex for solution by politicians alone. Business talent and a sound knowledge of economics were essential. With these qualities Mr. Young was imbued in a superlative degree.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the whole Premier's plan, upon which hopes for the salvation of the country are based, is a development of the work of the committee. South Australia took the lead in dealing firmly with the financial difficulties with which it was confronted, and the methods adopted on the advice of Mr. Young and his colleagues have been since accepted by the other States and the Commonwealth. Even in the British press the establishment of the committee has been held up as an example which might well be followed in England.

It is gratifying to know that in the opinion of Mr. Young no other country in the world has a better chance of recovery than Australia. His judgment is entitled to the utmost respect because, as Mr. Butler has pointed out, he is not only a gifted financier but an authority on economics. The generous recognition of the labors of other members of the committee and the thanks extended to them by Mr. Young "for their co-operation in the work which we have shared equally together" is typical of his nature.

"South Australia was, indeed, fortunate in being able to secure your services at a time when she was confronted with some of the greatest financial difficulties in her history," wrote Mr. Hill in regretfully accepting the resignation of Mr. Young. "Everyone appreciates the fine spirit you have shown in placing your wide experience at the disposal of the State. I am sure it must be gratifying to you to know that the financial policy enunciated by myself on behalf of the South Australian Government in July, 1930, has now been accepted by the Governments of Australia and incorporated in the Premier's plan."

Mr. Butler was equally sincere and emphatic in his commendation of Mr. Young. "His work has been a notable patriotic contribution in a time of national need," said the Liberal leader. "He has been a tower of strength in assisting to pilot South Australia back to the road of prosperity."

And with those encomiums citizens of South Australia have every reason to agree.

At the end of June last year the Advisory Committee on State Finance came into existence quietly, did its work efficiently, and now, just as quietly, has disbanded.

Behind the work of this committee there is a story of voluntary service and sacrifice in the interests of the State.

Mr. Hill received a letter from the Commonwealth Bank intimating that it could not advance any further credit after the end of June, 1930. Something had to be done quickly. It was recognized that the confidence of the Commonwealth Bank in the State Government had to be restored, at once. A committee which would tender advice was decided upon.

Mr. J. W. Wanwright, of the Auditor-General's Department, Mr. L. C. Hunkin (Public Service Commissioner), Mr. R. R. Stuckey (Under Treasurer) were immediately marked out for membership. It was felt that the chairman should be a man of proved ability, and one who had the confidence of the banks and the business community. Mr. W. J. Young (managing director of Elder, Smith & Co., Limited) was approached, and after a consultation with Mr. T. E. Barr Smith (eventually he accepted this position. Prof. L. G. Melville, lecturer in economics at the University, was the 5th member.

The committee was notified that the Government desired it to—

Advise the Government on all matters in regard to State finances.

Plans for balancing the Budget with due regard to the economic effect of a limitation of expenditure. Increasing the revenue.

Incidence of and proposals for taxation.

Measures immediately necessary to protect the State's finances.

With businesslike efficiency the committee pushed on with its job. In some weeks the members met on an average as four days. They often met at the home of Mr. Young at Mount Pleasant. As statements issued by the Premier from time to time indicated



MR. W. J. YOUNG

the committee was in constant collaboration with the Government. It made a comprehensive survey of the State's finances and indicated the steps to be taken to stop the drift. Suggestions it made for economies in the Public Service have been adopted.

It must be a source of satisfaction to the committee to know that a programme of reconstruction it recommended is incorporated in what is now known as the Premier's plan.

Another important work which it did was the preparation of the case to the Commonwealth Government for a special grant of £250,000 which was received in the last financial year. It also prepared the very complete case presented to the Federal Public Accounts Committee showing the disabilities of South Australia under Federation.

The committees which have enquired into soldier settlement, education, and agriculture were set up on the suggestion of the Advisory Committee and have been in constant touch with it.

All this service Mr. Young and Prof. Melville gave voluntarily, and Messrs. Hunkin, Wanwright and Stuckey had to do it in with their official duties. To them the thanks of the taxpayers are due.

"As a means of transport in Central Australia, the slowest, cheapest, safest, and surest is the camel, for he does not break his back axle or run out of petrol," said Mr. C. T. Madigan in a lecture at the University last night on "Geological Exploration in Central Australia."

Mr. Madigan said the horse went out of date there in 1873, when Sir Thomas Elder introduced the camel, which was used on every station in Central Australia today. The motor car was expensive, quick, and apt to be dangerous, but it was marvellous what country it could get over. The most modern form of transport, the aeroplane, was at best only a means of reconnaissance as far as exploration was concerned. Aerial work had to be followed up on the ground to be of real value, but it was of enormous assistance to ground work.

The lecturer said that since 1927, when he visited the Western MacDonnell Ranges with Sir Douglas Mawson, he had made four trips to Central Australia to study the geological formation of the country. In 1929 he made an aerial reconnaissance of Lake Eyre, followed by a ground expedition to the same locality. Last year he took a camel journey into the Western MacDonnells, and this year he made another into the Eastern MacDonnells from which he returned only a month ago. He had been able to investigate the dry salt lakes, and the unknown desert in the south-eastern portion of Central Australia. Aerial photography had enabled him to make a more correct and more detailed topographical map of the Western MacDonnells, while the ground expeditions had resulted in a geological map and section of the western ranges and the first account of the geology of the eastern ranges.

Four Physiological Regions

"Central Australia may be divided into four physiological regions, starting from the south," continued Mr. Madigan. "They are the great salt lakes of northern South Australia, the great artesian basin (including Simpson's ribbed sand desert), the red soil-covered mulga plains, and the central ranges."

Lake Eyre was never completely covered with water, he said. When the rivers flowed the water was distributed near their mouths to a depth of a few inches at most, and soon evaporated. The great artesian basin covered an area of 108,000 square miles. It consisted of a bottom bed of Jurassic sands overlying the old bedrock, and covered by cretaceous clays. The water got into the sands where they reached the surface round the margins of the basin, mainly in Queensland. The overlying clay beds merely had to be pierced to allow the imprisoned water to rise to the surface. The bores gave over a million gallons a day in some cases, and the water was often nearly boiling.

Mr. C. H. Fagge (senior vice-president of the Royal College of Surgeons in London) will arrive in Australia in February to present the Great Mace to the Galassian College of Surgeons on behalf of the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons. While in Australia he will deliver the Syme oration, which was founded in memory of the late Sir G. Syme (first President of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons).

Popular Organ Feature

A popular feature of Mr. John Horner's recital on the Elder Conservatorium organ during the lunch-hour yesterday was the overture to Weber's "Oberon," its tuneful beauty well brought out by resourceful registration and excellent phrasing. The other pieces were of the classical order, comprising the Bach P minor prelude and fugue, Karg-Elert's "Cathedral Windows," view of "Adeste Fidelis" and "Lauda Sion," and Percy Grainger's "Bridal Song to a Norwegian Princess." All were rendered with high artistry.

Miss Kathleen Prince sang "Romanza," from Mascagni's Cavalleria Rusticana, with good effect.

In his next recital, on August 20, Mr. Horner will play two compositions of contemporary English organists, Martin Shaw's scherzo, "The Ride," and Harvey Grace's "Cradle Song."

Dr. Marcus L. E. Oliphant, accompanied by his wife and child, returned from London by the Hobsons Bay yesterday. He left Adelaide four years ago, when he won a scholarship in science at the Cambridge University. He will stay in Adelaide for a month with relatives before returning to Cambridge to continue research work in physics. At Trinity College, Cambridge, recently he was awarded the Messel Research Fellowship by the Royal Society. He was assistant to Professor Kerr Grant at the Adelaide University before he went abroad.

Sir Douglas Mawson, by the unanimous vote of the Royal Society last night, was awarded the Sir Joseph Verco medal for 1931 for distinguished scientific research in South Australia.

Appreciation of the services of Mr. W. J. Young, on the State Advisory Committee, was expressed at the commencement of the Chamber of Manufactures yesterday. A letter will be sent him, conveying the thanks of the manufacturing community.

Adv. 20-8-31

Adv. 12-8-31

Adv. 14-8-31

Adv. 12-8-31

Adv. 14-8-31