

The Cubic Nov. 1/11

Register, Nov

### WHY, MR. TREASURER?

The Verran Ministers are great hands at shifting responsibility. Their administration has been distinguished for the ready resource displayed in scuttling away from duty and leaving it to some other fellow. The Government is comprised of a crowd which seem anxious to establish a corner in "I-never-did-its." The latest is the appointment of the Government Geologist. Now this is the best joke of the farce. The Treasurer has politely informed the public that he has asked the University authorities to advise him in the selection of the Government Geologist! Fancy that! What have they to do with the job, anyway? The Government has its expert advisers, but they have been "turned down," evidently. What is Treasurer Vaughan's game? Let us think it out. Obviously he can shelter himself behind the fact that he never made the appointment. Oh, no! It was the University—that august and irresponsible body on North-terrace. In view of the heated controversy between a member of the University staff and Dr. Basedow, the wily Minister knew the chances of the ex-Assistant Government Geologist would, in vulgar but appropriate parlance, be mud!

### IS THE SECRET OUT?

Now, from all accounts, the University people have not altogether kept the fact secret that everything has long since been cut and dried. The public frequently hears the names of Woodward and Ward mentioned in association with the appointment of the Government Geologist. This is the point. If the University authorities are to advise, it means referring the matter to their geologists. They are the Rev. W. Howchin and Dr. Douglas Mawson. What are the qualifications of these gentlemen? Mr. Howchin is an F.G.S. I understand this means that you are proposed by any Fellow of the Geological Society, London, and seconded by two or three others, and there you are. You pay £2 2/ a year, and lo and behold! you scratch the magic letters after your name. You are a Fellow of the Society, an F.G.S. You receive the publications, and when you go to London you can attend the meetings and use the library at Burlington House, Picadilly West.

### LOOKING BACKWARD!

Mr. Howchin—the Rev. Mr. Howchin, F.G.S.—came from Scotland as a Methodist Minister. He was appointed secretary of the Children's Hospital, and did the job for years. Not much scope for geological study there, except perhaps an occasional stone from the operating theatre or pathological laboratory. Anyway, Mr. Howchin had accomplished nothing very sensational in the geological line up till then, and had published no profound literature, perhaps a paper on microscopic organisms known as Foraminifera. When Professor Tate, who was highly recommended as the Elder Professor of Natural Sciences by Professor Huxley, of London, died, Mr. Howchin—the Rev. Mr. Howchin, F.G.S.—shuts the door of the hospital secretary, and becomes lecturer on geology at the University, although Mr. J. D. Hiffe, B.Sc., had been selected by Professor Tate as his locum tenens in geology, and Mr. Boas, B.Sc., in mineralogy. Whether the statutes of the University and the terms of Sir Thomas Elder's endowment of £20,000 for the "chairs" of mathematics and natural sciences permitted it or not, Professor Tate's position was promptly split into three—geology went to Mr. Howchin, the Rev. Mr. Howchin, F.G.S.; mineralogy to Mr. Woolnough, and botany to Miss Benham. Enter Mr. Howchin, the Rev. Mr. Howchin, F.G.S., a full-fledged geologist.

### BETTER OFF.

Dr. Mawson is, of course, considerably better off in the matter of qualifications. He is a doctor of science and a bachelor of civil engineering. His reports on radium are fresh in the minds of all. It will be interesting to know whether he will dispose of his shares before he leaves for Antarctica. A sharebroker informs me that his report on the Elder's nitrate deposit did not prove to be a marvellous success. The deposit of "nitrates" in the cave was presumably something he should have blamed the birds for, because Geology Brown, after people had been advised to invest "all they could spare" in the venture, quietly reported that the whole of the deposit could be swept clean very quickly.

### WAIT FOR MAWSON.

At a meeting of the Science Guild, it is understood that a certain professor suggested that an Acting Government Geologist should be appointed until Dr. D. Mawson had returned from Antarctica! Are there no others? When Dr. Mawson has satisfied his ambition down south, and has honors thrust upon him it is possible he will prefer to go lecturing a la Shackleton to the £800 job as South Australian Government Geologist. So, when you look all round the proposition, it isn't the simple little thing that appears on the surface. Still Treasurer Vaughan scribbles on the docket, "Referred to the University for recommendation," and there's the curtain!

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Mr. C. T. Madigan, the last appointed Rhodes scholar for South Australia, is returning from England by the Orvieto, which arrived at Fremantle on Tuesday. Mr. Madigan is a student of geology, and being anxious to accompany the Mawson Antarctic expedition, he recently proceeded to England to interview the Rhodes trustees and obtain their permission to postpone his studies until the return of the expedition. This permission has been granted.

pardonable action has therefore surprised a whole community, of which mine is only one tongue."

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Professor Darnley Naylor, who is the president of the South Australian Amateur Football League, will leave Adelaide for England early in December, and on Tuesday afternoon the executive committee of the league met him at the University and presented him with an enlarged photograph of members of that committee, in recognition of his services. Mr. S. W. Jeffries, in handing the gift to the professor, expressed the hope that he would return to South Australia. Professor Darnley Naylor, in responding, said he only wished he could have done more for the amateur league. Next year would be a critical one, because the success of amateur football depended on how members stood by their clubs. Many players made a sacrifice when they decided to play in that association in order to have a game for amateurs and keep it clean and good. All lovers of amateur sport were thankful to them. So far as the University Club was concerned he believed those who had abstained from playing league football in the past would continue to do

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### LINKS WITH THE ANTARCTIC.

#### WIRELESS AND WEATHER.

MELBOURNE, November 1.

Arrangements have been made by the Minister for Home Affairs (Mr. O'Malley) for the services of an officer of the Meteorological Department to be granted to Dr. Mawson in connection with his scheme for maintaining wireless communication between the Antarctic expedition and the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth Meteorologist (Mr. Hunt) explained to-night that the distance between the objective of the Mawson expedition and the wireless stations being erected by the Commonwealth would be too great to permit of direct communication, and an intermediate station was therefore to be set up at Macquarie Island, about 600 miles south of Hobart. An officer of the department (Mr. Ainsworth) would accompany the expedition as far as this island, and would remain there in company with several members of Dr. Mawson's staff. He would be in charge of the station, and his duties would include the taking of observations synchronous with those made by the expedition and the Meteorological Department at Melbourne. A wireless station would be erected by Dr. Mawson so that messages from the main expedition might be received there and transmitted to Australia.

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### THE ANTARCTIC AEROPLANE.

It has been decided that Lieutenant Watkins, who was to have accompanied Dr. Mawson's Antarctic expedition as aviator, shall return to London by the next P. and O. steamer. After the engine of the aeroplane, in which an accident befel at Cheltenham recently, had been repaired, Dr. Mawson resolved not to use it again, except for sleighing purposes. Lieutenant Watkins expressed himself as being disappointed. The mishap at Cheltenham was due, like many aviation accidents, to the encountering of an air pocket. It was the first accident which Lieutenant Watkins had had. He was confident that had the machine, which is a Vickers, been repaired, no further mishap would have occurred.