

ANNEXED BY FRANCE.

SIR DOUGLAS MAWSON'S VIEWS.

The people of Australia will learn with surprise that Adelle Land, forming part of the great continent that lies immediately south of this country, has been annexed by the French Government. A despatch from Paris, under date January 7, states:—

"By decree signed by President Millerand, France has annexed Adelle Land, which was taken possession of by the Australian National Antarctic Expedition, under Sir Douglas Mawson, in 1911."

The Decree, which is dated November 27, 1924, also annexes to France the islands of St. Paul and Amsterdam, Kerguelen, and Crozet (in the South Indian Ocean). These, with Adelle Land, are placed under the Government of Madagascar, and con-

tain. This means unlimited possibilities as regards wind power. We are rapidly advancing in knowledge relating to the storage of electricity, and the time may not be far distant when the existence of wind power such as this may prove to be of great commercial value in the matter of the production, storage and transmission of electricity. The transmission of wireless messages is more readily effected in the cold polar regions than in the warmer portions of the earth's surface. This, coupled with the fact that the shortest routes from one part of the world to another are very often via the poles, may make it very desirable at some time to erect wireless transmission stations on the antarctic continent, and send messages that way. Certainly there is much less "jamming" as there are very few people there.

Acquisition by Australia.

Things are developing rapidly in matters of offence and defence, and it may be that the acquisition of land even so far south of Australia may be advantageous to every country in time of war. I have regarded the acquisition of this land area by Australia as of great importance, and when several years ago the matter was being discussed between the Colonial Office, the Commonwealth, and the New Zealand Government, I strongly urged in a letter to the Prime Minister's Department that the Australian rights to this territory should be upheld. What transpired between the Prime Minister's Department and the Colonial Office I never heard, but about 18 months ago it was made public that the antarctic regions south of New Zealand, including the Ross Sea, had been allocated as dependencies of the dominion. Quickly following up that declaration, Norwegian whalers proceeded there, and have since been successfully whaling, and paying to New Zealand a considerable levy on every barrel of oil obtained. The news that the French Government now lay claim to the Adelle Land region should not be received with any degree of pleasure in Australia.

A Flimsy Claim.

The French claim, as already indicated, is based upon very flimsy argument, and dates back a long while ago. It should be remembered in this connection that it was Capt. Cook who first raised the British flag in the New Hebrides and New Caledonia, but it was the French who took possession at a later date and colonized them. France deserves great credit and certain territory in the antarctic regions, not because of D'Urville's limited explorations, but from the fact that Dr. Charcot, over a number of years, conducted excellent scientific explorations along the Antarctic coast of the south-western Pacific, proceeding south-west of Cape Horn. France may justly lay claim to the territory in that region.

What Should be Done.

There is another feature, too, of the case that is of the utmost importance, and must not be lost sight of. It is this. About the year 1880 the Canadian Government, after due consideration, issued a proclamation that henceforth all Polar islands and lands lately discovered and to be discovered, and not already occupied by European nations, lying between Canada and the North Pole, and bounded to the east and to the west by the meridian of longitude which limit Canada itself, were Canadian territory. This proclamation was considered by other nations but not challenged, and has been regarded for some time past as a precedent to be followed in the partition of other polar areas. That is to say if unoccupied, polar lands are to be allocated to such occupied civilized powers as lie nearest to them, to the south in the northern hemisphere, and to the north in the southern hemisphere. It was upon that basis that Spitzbergen was allocated to Norway in the post-war settlement of what was termed "No Man's Land." Following this precedent Australia would naturally have Adelle Land, and the whole of the coastline explored by the Australian Antarctic Expedition, allocated to her. On the other hand France would be allocated that very promising, but very little explored region, south of Kerguelen Island. France has a number of possessions in the Indian Ocean, including Reunion, Madagascar, and Kerguelen itself. Kerguelen lies about 25 deg. south, and is ideally situated as the command position for the further-south ice-bound coast of adjacent Antarctica. It is therefore, in the opinion of the expedition, a most valuable possession.

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SIR DOUGLAS MAWSON.

stitute administrative dependencies of that island.

The French Minister for the Colonies, in advising the annexations, says:—

"Owing to the long-founded ignorance of the economic value of this uninhabited territory, situated as it is, away from the main sea routes, it had not seemed absolutely necessary to confirm, by establishing an effective authority, the sovereign rights which France long back had acquired over the Archipelago and those parts of the antarctic continent sighted by our navigators."

The scientific missions carried out in the southern seas at the beginning of the century have ascertained that those long-neglected dependencies in the antarctic zones could contribute extremely valuable resources to the vast fishing industry; whales, seals, sea elephants abound in these parts, and the great industrial value of the products furnished by these animals has not taken long to stimulate the creation of fishing and hunting enterprises. Already the first campaigns have proved most fruitful."

D'Urville's Explorations.

On receipt of the foregoing information a representative of The Register, in view of the fact that Sir Douglas Mawson was the head of the expedition that explored Adelle Land, spent two years there, and took possession of that portion of the antarctic continent for the British Crown, waited on that gentleman at the University. Sir Douglas, who had already received the information, readily consented to make a statement on the subject. He said:—"In 1840 D'Urville, in charge of a French naval expedition, consisting of two ships, the Astrolabe and the Zeeb, set out to explore certain groups of islands in the Pacific. On arrival in Australia he found that there was an interest springing up in the exploration of the south polar regions, so leaving Hobart, he made a dash south, and some within sight of ice-covered land, which he named Adelle Land after his wife. He endeavoured to effect a landing, but on account of the precipitous ice cliffs, only succeeded in climbing up a small rocky inlet some miles off the coast. After raising the French tricolor, and drinking a bottle of champagne, the expedition proceeded to the warmer southern sea. The expedition was certainly successful in obtaining information of some value, but commentators have always drawn attention to the fact that they might have done considerably more had they effected a landing. They brought back practically no specimens, no details, nor data such as they were capable of obtaining with the trained staff that they possessed, whereas in the southern sea they made a most notable series of scientific observations. So little information did they bring back that at the time of our Australian antarctic expedition in 1911, geographers were very much divided as to what was to be expected—a large land mass or merely isolated islands. As it turned out, we proved that the coastline seen by D'Urville was portion of the antarctic continent, and during our two years' stay, we mapped in some hundreds of miles, not only of the land seen by D'Urville, but also we extended the coastline, both to the east and the west, and general information as to meteorology, magnetism, geology and hydrology is now available. Australia indeed has done a very great amount of work in exploring and developing a scientific knowledge of the country."

Economic Value of Adelle Land.

This great land lies due south of Australia, and its future must be more profitably mined in Australia than in any other country. Roughly speaking it is nearly 2,000 nautical miles from Adelaide. As regards its economical future, it may be very great. Apart from the possibilities of possible mineral deposits, there is a great wealth of life in the sea—whales, seals and penguins are found in great numbers, while fish life is very abundant. There is no doubt that the fisheries will be developed in time. The very fact of the existence of the islands will offer advantages in certain aspects of commercial activities. There are no flies, and few insects, and fish never go on land. You simply dump them on the ice, and you have no further overhead expenses for transporting machinery and so on. You may make use of Nature's refrigeration. That of the most obvious potentialities of the Adelle Land coast is that a strong wind blows off the coast in the winter months almost continuously throughout the year. We found that the average velocity of the main antarctic breeze in the Commonwealth Bay averaged 20 miles an

RHODES SCHOLARSHIPS.

Dr. M. J. Rendall Due on Sunday.

Adelaide University Work.

Dr. M. J. Rendall, late head master of Winchester College, England, who is on a special mission to the dominions in behalf of the Rhodes Scholarship Trustees, is due in Adelaide on Sunday.

The year's work of the Adelaide University will commence in earnest on March 10.

Dr. Rendall is touring all the dominions in behalf of the Rhodes Trustees, his objects being to maintain touch between headquarters and the selection committees overseas, to meet old Rhodes Scholars, and to exchange ideas. He recently toured South Africa, and has been for some time in Perth. His visit to South Australia will occupy about a week.

According to a private letter received by Mr. Eardley (Registrar of the University), Dr. Rendall is a distinguished figure in the home land, in a much wider circle than that of educational and scholastic affairs, with which, of course, he is more closely concerned. His career as Head Master of Winchester College was a great one, and he retired with a remarkable reputation. One of his old boys stated that no schoolmaster ever had a stronger hold on the love of the lads under him. He also had a fine athletic record, and was a Cambridge Association Blue. Dr. Rendall's own school was Harrow. The visitor, who is now in his sixty-third year, is also the Chairman of the League of the Empire.

University Work.

There will be many absentees from the professorial list of the Adelaide University when work starts in earnest on March 10.

Professor J. E. Wilton (Mathematics) is in England, and is not expected back in Adelaide until early in July. His work will be carried on by a locum tenens. Professor Strong (English) is also a visitor to the home country, and his absence will extend over the whole year. Mr. A. E. M. Kirkwood, one of the lecturers, and Mr. W. J. McDonnell, of St. Peter's College, will undertake his duties.

Professor Hancock, the new Professor of History, who succeeds Professor Henderson, will not assume his new duties until January, 1926, the classes meantime being under the jurisdiction of Principal E. S. Klek and Mr. W. Oldham.

Professor Henderson is now a Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford. The Chancellor of the University (Sir George Murray) will begin his vacation trip to England on March 5, just prior to the opening of the classes; and as the Vice-Chancellor (Professor Mitchell) is already in England and not expected back for a few months, the duties of Chancellor will devolve upon Professor Rennie, Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

All entries from students for the coming sessions of the University are due by March 2, and the term begins on March 10, for all classes the medical and dentistry courses, both of which commenced their work at the Adelaide Hospital on February 2. Lectures will begin on March 17, and this year students are required to attend such preliminary meetings of their classes in the first week as may be announced at the University.

It had been hoped that the forthcoming term would see those studying the engineering and physics courses housed in the new building being erected by the Government. This will not be, however; and it will probably be several months before the building is ready. The want of the new quarters is keenly felt. The engineering quarters especially, have long been crowded out, and students cannot do their best work under such cramped conditions. Much the same position applies to the physics classes, and several other faculties will soon require more roomy premises.

SOLAR OBSERVATORY.

Work at Canberra.

Chat With Professor Duffield.

Professor W. Geoffrey Duffield, Director of the Commonwealth Solar Observatory at Canberra, arrived in Adelaide by the Melbourne express on Saturday, on a visit to his brother, Mr. Kenneth Duffield, of Seawall, Glenelg, with whom he is staying for a few days. Professor Duffield is one of South Australia's most distinguished sons.

He was born at Gawler, being a son of the late Mr. D. Walter Duffield, but spent most of the early days of his life at Glenelg, during which period he attended St. Peter's College, and subsequently the Adelaide University, where he



PROFESSOR W. G. DUFFIELD.

took his B.Sc. degree, and then graduated as D.Sc. He went to Cambridge, entered as a student of Trinity, and took his B.A. degree. On leaving Cambridge he started scientific work at the National Physical Laboratory, at Teddington.

Fourteen Years' Consideration.

After having spent 15 months there, Dr. Duffield went to Professor Arthur Schuster's Laboratory, at the University of Manchester, and remained there till 1908. Then, as there was a good deal of talk about founding a Commonwealth Observatory, he returned to Australia, and discussed the question with the then Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Alfred Deakin, who gave the movement a good deal of support. A resident of Ballarat, Mr. James Oddie, had offered to present a telescope, having a 9-in. object glass, for use at the Commonwealth Observatory, and this Mr. Deakin had accepted. The next thing was to select a site suitable for an observatory at Canberra, the Federal capital. One was chosen, and Dr. Duffield returned to England in 1902, having been appointed to the Professorship of Physics at the University of Reading. He held that position till 1914, when he came to Australia again with the Science Congress. While in this country the Great War broke out, and he hurried back to England. His services were immediately requisitioned by the Royal Air Force authorities, and during the war he was engaged upon investigation work at the No. 1 School of Instruction for pilots at Reading. He was retained for this work till after the war, but returned to Australia in 1922, and after interviewing the Government once more on the subject of the Commonwealth Observatory, it was decided to proceed with the scheme at once, and Dr. Duffield was requested to take charge of it. As a committee in England also had the matter in hand, and they were anxious that Dr. Duffield should take control, he agreed to accept the position.

Observatory Work in America.

In 1923 Dr. Duffield proceeded to Canberra, inspected the site of the proposed observatory, and gave preliminary advice as to the general outline of the place, but it was not until 1924 that he took up his duties as director of the observatory. In the interim he had returned to England in