

ado. 9-10-35

### COUNCIL TOPICS

**Local Court Jurisdiction.**—The Chief Secretary (Sir George Ritchie) told Mr. Homburg (L.C.L.) that the Bill to enlarge the jurisdiction of the Local Court to £750 would be ready for introduction to Parliament next Tuesday.

**Medical Research Institute.**—The Chief Secretary informed Mr. Homburg (L.C.L.) that a request from the University of Adelaide that the Government should give £15,000 towards the foundation of an Institute of Medical Research was being considered by the Government.

**Bills from Assembly.**—The Public Charities Amendment Bill, the Health Amendment Bill, and the Trades Descriptions Bill, were received from the Assembly. The second reading of the measures were set down for Tuesday.

**Road to Mildura.**—Mr. Cowan (L.C.L.) was informed by the Chief Secretary that the greater portion of the road between Renmark and Mildura within this State had been graded, and when the work was complete it would compare favorably with the Victorian section. In those circumstances extensive improvements were not considered justified.

**South-Eastern Drainage.**—The second reading of the South-Eastern Drainage Amendment Bill, which was received from the Assembly, was moved by the Chief Secretary. The debate was adjourned until Tuesday.

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## GREAT BENEFITS IF WATER CAN BE EXTRACTED FROM AIR

### Prof. Kerr Grant Wishes Visitor Luck

GREAT benefits could accrue from an economical method of extracting water from the atmosphere, but the practical obstacle to all methods disclosed so far was their high cost, said the professor of physics at the University (Prof. Kerr Grant) today.

He was commenting on a report from Perth that Dr. W. Klaphake, a German scientist, was on his way to Sydney to patent a process of his invention to extract enough water from moisture-carrying air to provide drinking water for stock. It would be useful, he said, in the Nullarbor plains and other districts where the air was often humid, but not in districts where the air was habitually dry. It involved a process of condensation.

Prof. Kerr Grant said that he wished the visitor every success and if he could extract useful quantities of water from the air in areas without permanent water he deserved not only congratulation but substantial reward.

The Central Australian and Nullarbor plains climate, however, was so dry in ordinary conditions that the extraction of sufficient water to be useful was unlikely by any process, he said.

Extraction of water from the air was done every day in the laboratory, by freezing or chemical agents, but the cost on a commercial scale would be prohibitive.

Where sufficient quantities of salt water and fuel were present water was obtained by distillation for human and industrial use, as at Whyalla and in Lower California.

The methods used for industry would probably be too costly for pastoral purposes.

If Dr. Klaphake had some hitherto unknown method, which was cheap and practicable, of obtaining water in arid areas it would be of great benefit, said Prof. Kerr Grant.

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**Arresting Career**

A self-made man, Sir John Latham studied for the Bar on the proceeds of scholarships and on admission as a barrister, tided over the early lean years of his legal career by lecturing at the Melbourne University in logic, philosophy, and law. He served in the Great War with the Navy, acting as intelligence officer with the rank of Lieutenant-Commander, and, as a result of the experience thus gained, was appointed to the staff of the Australian delegation at the Peace Conference in 1919.

On his return to Australia, he made his mark as one of the leaders of the Victorian Bar, and, soon after entering the Federal Parliament in 1922, he attained front rank prominence and became Attorney-General in the Bruce Government in succession to Sir Littleton Groom.

When the Bruce Government was shattered on the arbitration issue in 1929, Mr. Latham, becoming leader of the Opposition in the absence of the former Prime Minister (Mr. Bruce), who was defeated for Flinders, devoted himself to the task of building the Nationalist Party into an organisation again capable of wielding power. Two years later he could have been Prime Minister; but, in view of the unsettled political situation, he voluntarily relinquished the leadership of the United Australia Party in favor of Mr. Lyons, who was being acclaimed by the nation because of his successful leadership of the great conversion loan appeals. He became Deputy Prime Minister and Attorney-General in the first Lyons Administration, and in this capacity he was one of the dominant personalities in the House and a tower of strength in the councils of the Government.

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### Achievements Of South Australians

In a talk to members of the Rotary Club at their weekly lunch at the Embassy yesterday on 10 great achievements of South Australians, Mr. B. S. bassy yesterday on 10 great achievements he referred to had been copied in many other parts of the world.

The first was the decision of the founders of the State to have no convicts, South Australia being the only State to which this applied. The second was the formation of a City Corporation in 1840, only four years after the founding of the State. Sydney did not have a corporation until 1842.

Leading up to the third great achievement, that of John Ridley's invention of a reaping machine, Mr. Roach said that following a financial crash, Governor Grey came to this State and told the people "to go outside and grow wheat." Previously all South Australia's wheat was imported from Tasmania. The fourth was the abolition of State aid for religion in 1850, and the fifth the introduction of voting by ballot in 1856. Then in 1858, Mr. W. R. Boothby invented the system of putting a cross opposite the name required. England copied this method in 1872. In America it was still called the Australian system. In 1863 the Torrens system of transferring land was introduced. Mr. R. R. Torrens suggested the scheme which involved the registry of the title of property at a Lands Title office. The next achievement brought about largely by the work of Sir Charles Todd and John McDouall Stuart, was the construction of the overland telegraph line. Legislation was introduced in 1871 allowing a man to marry his deceased wife's sister, South Australia being the first unit of the British Empire to adopt this legislation.

In 1874, when South Australia was a poor country and had only a small population, the University of Adelaide was founded. The last achievement was the adoption in 1893—South Australia again leading the way so far as Australia was concerned—of women's suffrage.

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## SIR J. LATHAM NEW CHIEF JUSTICE

### Appointment Announced MINISTER'S TRIBUTE

#### Notable Legal And Political Career

CANBERRA, October 10.

Sir John Latham's appointment as Chief Justice of the High Court was announced tonight by the Attorney-General (Mr. Menzies). Cabinet decided upon the appointment this afternoon, and Sir John Latham's acceptance was received by the Prime Minister tonight. The commission of the new Chief Justice will date from tomorrow, and Sir John Latham will come to Canberra in the near future for the formal swearing-in ceremony by the Governor-General. The appointment carries a salary of £3,500 a year, which is not subject to the financial emergency cut.

A glowing tribute to Sir John Latham's great ability and rare qualifications for the highest office in the gift of the Commonwealth Government was paid by Mr. Menzies tonight.

"Australia is very fortunate to secure his services in succession to the distinguished former Chief Justice," he said. "It is true that Sir John Latham's prominence in the political world of Australia in recent years may have obscured in the minds of some people that, irrespective of politics, his position at the Bar has for many years been one of the highest distinction. His claims to occupy the Chief Justiceship of a court in which a wide and deep knowledge is necessary of constitutional problems, as well as of general questions of law, are outstanding. I am sure that his appointment will be welcomed by the whole of the legal profession of Australia, and that in his new office his services to Australia will be marked by the same dignity, industry, dispassionate judgment, and intellectual power as he has constantly displayed in the past."

Protests in the House of Representatives late tonight by both sections of the Labor Party against the action of the Government in announcing Sir John Latham's appointment to the



SIR JOHN LATHAM

High Court of Australia to the press instead of to Parliament, resulted in an angry scene.

When Mr. Lane (U.A.P., N.S.W.) moved the gag as Mr. Ward (Lang Labor) rose to speak, Mr. Ward called to his colleagues not to participate in the division, shouting, in doing so, "It's a class appointment."

Mr. Ward's appeal was taken up by Mr. Riordan from the Federal Labor benches, and both sections dramatically marched out, leaving only Messrs. Curtin, Forde, and Green as tellers. They declined to act and, in accordance with the standing orders, the motion closing the debate was automatically decided in the affirmative.

The motion that "The House do now adjourn" was then carried on the voices and, amid great excitement, the Speaker (Mr. Bell) adjourned the House until next day.

The protest was first voiced by the leader of the Lang group (Mr. Beasley), who said that Mr. Menzies had violated practice in not making the first announcement to Parliament. He was supported by Mr. Curtin, who expressed amazement that any announcement should have been made to the press in view of the fact that only that very afternoon the Attorney-General (Mr. Menzies) had informed him in reply to a question in the House, that no appointment had been made.

Mr. James (Lang Lab., N.S.W.), in a violent attack on Sir John Latham, said he was biased against the working class.

"I could not expect justice if I appealed before this man," shouted Mr. James. "I might appear at any time for a breach of the Crimes Act for telling the people not to participate in war."

Amid loud cries of "Shame!" from the Government benches, Mr. James shouted that Sir John Latham was a callous and brutal individual.

Mr. Menzies said it had never been the practice to announce judicial appointments in Parliament.

### P.C. And G.C.M.G.

Sir John Latham led the Australian goodwill mission to the East early last year, and soon afterwards retired from politics to return to his profession. His signal services to Australia were rewarded with a Privy Councillorship and later with a G.C.M.G., one of the highest orders of knighthood open to a commoner.

On the floor of the House, Sir John Latham was a lucid and arresting speaker and was recognised as a keen but fair fighter in debate.

Few Australians have made a greater financial sacrifice to serve the country than Sir John Latham. He was earning more than £8,000 a year at the Bar when he entered politics, but he was compelled to relinquish the greater part of his practice because of his Ministerial duties.

### VERCO MEDAL

#### Honor For Professor Harvey Johnston

Professor T. Harvey Johnston, professor of zoology at the University of Adelaide, will be the next recipient of the Sir Joseph Verco medal, which is conferred from time to time upon any member of the Royal Society in this State for scientific research work which is deemed worthy of the honor. In making this announcement last night at the Royal Society's annual meeting, Dr. T. D. Campbell (president) said that the council of the society had received a recommendation from the Sir Joseph Verco Memorial committee that the medal should be conferred upon Professor Johnston.

In moving that the recommendation be adopted, Professor J. B. Cleland, who was the previous recipient of the medal, spoke highly of the scientific and research work done by Professor Johnston.

Sir Douglas Mawson drew attention to Professor Johnston's prickly pear investigations.

Professor Johnston is a distinguished scientist, with a world-wide reputation, and is probably best known for his work as scientific controller of the investigations conducted in New South Wales and Queensland by the Commonwealth Prickly Pear Board. In 1912, Professor Johnston was sent abroad by the Government to enquire into the possibility of controlling the prickly pear. In recognition of his investigations he was awarded the Syme Research medal and prize by the University of Melbourne. Professor Johnston has had wide experience in zoological work, having visited Mexico, the West Indies, South America, the United States, Southern Asia, the East Indies, and Africa in the course of his studies. He has made two journeys to the Antarctic. Professor Johnston is a past president of the Royal Society, and is the author of many publications on parasitology and entomology.

The Verco medal will be conferred upon Professor Johnston at the Society's next meeting.

Professor Walter C. Howchin was the first recipient of this medal, followed by Mr. J. M. Black and Sir Douglas Mawson.