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THE EDUCATION COMMISSION.

The cost of the Education and Adelaide University Royal Commission, as stated in a paper, laid before Parliament on Tuesday, was as follows:—Travelling expenses and attendance fees, £1,272 4/9; stationery, postage, stamps, and sundries, £41 9/2; printing reports and evidence, £798 17/3; total, £2,112 11/2.

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Chamber Music Concert.

At the Elder Hall last night a more than usually interested audience heard a chamber music programme, with vocal numbers and piano solo interspersed. Professor J. M. Ennis was at the piano, and the other performers were Mr. Eugene Alderman and Miss Sylvia Whittington (violins), Mrs. Alderman (viola), and Mr. Fritz Homburg (violincello). The principal work was a new writing by Ernest Chausson, a quartet in A, for piano and strings. There are four movements, all containing uncommon themes of varied and fascinating construction. The work teems with difficulties and startling extreme modulations. The indecision and unpleasant tonality of much modern music is absent owing to the clear design and solid structure of the form. At the opening of the second movement some eloquent staves for viola, played with excellent tone, were very noticeable, also extremely powerful passages for piano in the third movement. The finale includes a presentation by all the instruments in turn of several themes heard throughout the work, which produced a wonderful effect. At a second public hearing the work would be closely followed as one containing object-lessons to aspiring composers, in that, although modern in effect, the result is obtained, not by freak or pure chance, but by solid study and creative instinct. Grieg's Quartet in G Minor, for strings, was full of interest. The four movements, "andante," "romance," "intermezzo," and "saltarello," gave infinite pleasure to lovers of stringed instruments. At times the first violin was rather intense, covering the tone of the other strings. This was not noticeable in the second movement, which was exquisitely played. Professor Ennis, amongst many accomplishments, is a solo pianist of high rank. He played Chopin's "Fantasia, Op. 49," one striking point of which was the absolute perfection of phrasing. Contrary motion passages of trying description were singularly clear, and there was some chord-playing of great merit. Miss Muriel Day (Elder scholar) was the assisting vocalist. She sang with a good, round tone and intelligent phrasing Brahms' "Feldweinsamkeit" and "Wie melodien zehrt es mir;" a charming "Folk song" by MacDowell; and Stanford's "Boat song." With stricter attention to diction Miss Day should reach a high standard as a contralto singer. Mr. Winsloe Hall accompanied the young vocalist.

MAWSON RELIEF EXPEDITION.

Pride in the daring achievements of Dr. Douglas Mawson and his brave companions, and sympathy with them in their protracted exile and severe hardships, are widespread among Australians. A cordial and satisfactory response may therefore be expected to the appeal of Capt. J. K. Davis for funds needful for the equipment of the relief expedition and the publication of the scientific report of the explorations and researches which have been conducted with so much gratifying success. The public were deeply moved by the sad story, briefly recorded in a wireless message from Dr. Mawson of the disappearance in an unfathomable crevasse, in December last, of Lieut. Ninnis with a dog team and valuable food supplies, and of the death from malnutrition in January of Dr. Mertz. Of the party which engaged in exploring the coastline south-east of the winter quarters in Adelle Land, Dr. Mawson notified—"On February 7 I alone reached the winter quarters, having travelled through snow and fogs over heavily-crevassed areas, miraculously guided by Providence." The Aurora had waited in Commonwealth Bay until she was obliged hurriedly to depart on account of terrific gales. She left a few hours only before Dr. Mawson reached the hut and rejoined six members of his expedition. Eighteen men were brought back to Hobart in March by the Aurora, and the duty devolves upon Australia of rescuing the other seven explorers as soon as climatic opportunities will permit. As the necessity of having again to dispatch the Aurora to Antarctica was not then foreseen, the serious additional outlay involved in that enterprise was not considered in framing the original estimate of the cost of the expedition; but the imprisonment of Dr. Mawson and his comrades for two years in Adelle Land is a sufficient reason in itself for further cheerful deeds of patriotic generosity towards the expedition. Capt. Davis proposes to start, with a trusty body of seamen, in the Aurora for Commonwealth Bay in November. He has secured handsome contributions towards the relief fund in England—Lady Scott, widow of the late Antarctic hero, contributed £100—and his confidence that Australians will provide the remainder of the money required, should be quickly justified.

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NEW DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION.

Interview with Mr. Maughan.

The formal appointment of Mr. M. Maughan, B.A., as Director of Education, was made in Executive Council on Thursday. During the day the new Director was the recipient of many congratulations on his promotion.

A representative of The Register had a chat with him. In reply to the opening question, he remarked:—"Yes, I have already been in charge of the department for 18 months during the last seven and a half years. The longest stretch was eight months, during the absence of the late Director in England, when my business was simply to carry on the work of the department without attempting to originate anything. That was quite sufficient to keep Mr. Neale and me going. The office has always been rather understaffed, but I must not allow you to think that the Minister has ever grudged us assistance. The fact is that we were all brought up on very economical lines. No one could make the official penny go further than the late Mr. Hartley, and he taught us to deal with public matters with all the economy we should exercise over our private affairs. More so, indeed, for we in the office have very little time for our own business."

Is it not a fact that the proper work of the Director of Education has often been done after office hours?—There is a good deal in that. His time has been so much occupied during the day by the more important correspondence, and by the continual stream of callers, that he has very often had to do his planning after he has closed his office.

I believe that you have had experience as a teacher in a secondary school?—I began my life work in Prince Alfred College. By-the-way, I was one of the first batch of students at the foundation of the University of Adelaide.

You will therefore be quite prepared to undertake the extension of the secondary system?—Very much so. The high schools are already proving a great boon to the country, and when we have junior technical schools and technical schools associated with them, our boys and girls ought to begin life with a far better preparation than is the case even at present.

I suppose your previous work as an inspector will prove of advantage to you in your new position?—Oh, yes, immensely so. My direct work in the schools has given me an intimate knowledge of their conditions and their requirements, as well as a sympathy which comes only from fellow feeling. I know practically all the teachers in the service, with the exception of those who very recently joined.

Your visits have enabled you to know the conditions under which the teachers work and the necessities of the department with regard to the buildings?—I believe I could describe to you the shape and accommodation of nearly every public school in the State, and many of the small ones as well, and I could tell you a good deal about the condition of a lot of them.

What are your plans for the future?—Just at present I am not called upon to originate plans. The recommendations of the commission are occupying the attention of the Minister, and it will take a long time to work out such schemes as are adopted. I think the recommendations have been very carefully thought out, and while there are one or two about which I have doubt, I believe that the general scheme contained in them will result in a very complete educational system if, or when, it is carried out.

You have had plenty of good advice?—I think almost every man I meet tells me to take care of myself and not do too much. I am going to take that advice, and follow it closely. My resolutions are excellent. In time we shall find out what the performance will be. Seriously, I think that if a man is capable of good work, he is doing a positive wrong to the country, if he tries to do too much. There is a very great deal to do in this office—far more than can be possibly attended to by one man, or even two, and I know by long experience that if I attempt to touch detail, I shall be able to do nothing else.

Do you regard the position as now created one which requires all your time in constructive work?—There is no doubt about that. To introduce any new features into the present system will necessitate so much increased attention and concentration that it will be practically necessary for me to withdraw almost entirely from routine office work, which must be delegated to others. Fortunately, I have a most efficient righthand man in Col. Neale, who has been in the office for 31 years, and has pretty well everything at his fingers' ends. Not everything. It takes 10 years to learn that, at least, and both Mr. Neale and myself often find it necessary to refer to the Nestor of the office for advice. I mean Mr. Stanton (Secretary to the Minister of Education). I do not know how we could have done without him in the last seven years. Mr. Stanton has been guide, philosopher, and friend. He has kept us from making mistakes, and has shown us the proper course to pursue in different cases. In brief, he has been invaluable.