

TO HELP MAWSON.

Capt. Lavis's Mission.

An Appeal to Australia.

FREMANTLE, August 19.

Capt. J. Davis (Commander of the Aurora), who has been on a mission to England with the view of collecting funds for the Mawson Expedition, is returning by the Orontes, which arrived to-day. "I expect to return to the arctic to pick up Dr. Mawson in December," he said. "We shall collect a party together, and provided the funds roll in as I anticipate they will do we will set out for Adele Land about November. It would be impossible, of course, to attempt the task in the winter time. Why, the wind blows then with a velocity of 200 miles an hour! When you think that 75 miles an hour is ordinary hurricane force, you can imagine that sometimes in that region it blows with the strength of two hurricanes rolled into one. No vessel, no matter how strongly she was constructed, could stand such weather. I am happy to say that I collected £2,000 out of £10,000 required to complete the success of the Australian expedition. The British Government, and Sir Robert Lucas Tooth, Bart., headed the list with £1,000 each. Lady Scott also subscribed handsomely, and the members of the late Scott Expedition were very liberal. Considering that I arrived in England at a time when the British public was being asked to subscribe £90,000 for the purposes of presenting the Crystal Palace to the nation, I think I did remarkably well. Of course, my path was made smooth for me by the public recognition of the wonderful work already performed by the expedition. The money is required for the purposes of fitting up the Aurora and for the publication of the scientific investigations carried out by the expedition. Dr. Mawson desires to publish everything in time to show to the British Association party when it arrives in Australia next year. It will take some time to put this report in concrete form, and an idea of the probable outlay can be obtained when I tell you that the publication of the scientific report of the Scott expedition will cost about £17,000. Of course Dr. Mawson's will not cost anything like that. It remains to be seen whether Australia will respond to the call for the balance. I think she will readily do so. We would have made an earlier appeal, only that our plans were not matured, and when I was sailing for England the public was being asked to subscribe to the Scott memorial. It would be a thousand pities if, after Dr. Mawson had been imprisoned for two years in the antarctic, and after he has provided such an excellent advertisement for Australia, because of the immense value of his researches, that he should be allowed to arrive back and commence to work off the burden of the large debt. When in England Sir Ernest Shackleton informed me that he was contemplating an excursion across the antarctic continent, although he had not made any definite plans."

THE MAWSON EXPEDITION

CAPTAIN DAVIS RETURNS

THE CALL FOR FUNDS.

FREMANTLE, August 19.

Captain Davis, the commander of the Aurora, returned to-day by the Orontes. In an interview he said he succeeded in England in collecting £3,000 of £10,000 required for the further fitting out of the expedition. He anticipated no difficulty in gaining the balance in Australia, and expected to be able to relieve Dr. Mawson about December next.

British people and Australians in London responded liberally to the call for funds, and this was mainly the result of the fine work done by Dr. Mawson and his comrades in the way of meteorological and magnetic work. All the scientific men spoke highly of this work, and it would be a pity if Australians allowed Dr. Mawson to come out of the Antarctic, after being imprisoned there for two years, and to allow him to start then to work off a heavy debt.

Advertiser, August 20/13

THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION.

One satisfactory aspect of the appointment to the Directorship of Education, just announced, is the fact that the position has not been exploited for political purposes. There had been some talk which pointed to a different method of dealing with the matter, but though speculation and rumor along these lines were encouraged by the delay in filling the vacancy, it is gratifying to know that in the result the opportunity for Ministerial patronage was not used in a manner so objectionable. Apart from the general inexpediency of employing political power in order to provide high-salaried posts in the Public Service for politicians who have begun to sigh for a permanency—a practice which necessarily tends to lower the tone of public life—such a position as that of Director of Education, requiring a special training as well as administrative experience, is especially unsuited for treatment as a snug haven into which a wearied politician may retire for the rest of his days. The appointment of Mr. Maughan, which is in line with several recent instances where subordinate officers have been promoted to the highest positions in their departments, notwithstanding persistent reports as to the possible introduction of outsiders, is sure to please the members of the Civil Service, who naturally feel it a serious reflection upon themselves when action is taken suggesting that the service is unable to train and develop its own responsible leaders. While it may be true that occasionally an infusion of fresh blood does good in revitalising an organisation apt to drift into the slumber of routine, the principle is a sound one that when a man able to fill a great position with credit can be supplied from the service itself, no Government ought to look farther afield. Discontent would be the inevitable outcome of a system which withdrew the prizes of civil employment from officers whose healthy and reasonable ambition it is to gain them. In the Education Department the posts carrying large salaries are particularly few, considering the importance of the work and the heavy responsibilities attaching to it, so that in this case there is a special reason why the Directorship should go to a member of the service unless it is perfectly clear that none is fitted to discharge the duties of the office.

The only remarkable feature of the appointment now announced is that the Government should have kept it open for so many months, merely in the end to give it to a gentleman whose claims were as well known and as well proved at the time the vacancy occurred as after the long delay in filling it. That the Government should have deferred action until the return of the Premier from England was natural enough, but Mr. Peake has now been back six weeks. It was understood that Ministers desired to keep the position vacant until the report of the Education Commission had been received. This, too, was an intelligible attitude, because it was probable that the Commission would—as in fact it did—recommend a complete reorganisation of the department in its administrative aspect, with incidental changes in the functions of the Directorship. Obviously it was desirable that the choice of the new Director should be considered in conjunction with the altered regime of the department, and the new or modified range of duties to be undertaken by the administrative head. The curious thing, however, is that having been advised as to policy by the Royal Commission, the Government, without announcing what they accept or reject in the recommendations, at the eleventh hour hurry on the appointment of the Director for the avowed purpose of getting his advice on the effect of the advice given to the Crown by the Commissioners. In other words, so far as we can see, Mr. Maughan steps into a position the duties of which have still to be finally defined, and will be required to carry out a new policy the precise lines of which have not yet been agreed upon. Probably the scheme outlined by the Education Commission, irrespective of any question of the expenditure it may involve, will be modified in important particulars. It may be hoped, for the sake of the country and of Mr. Maughan himself, that no attempt will be made to institute the cumbrous system of administration proposed in the report. The new Director is a man of conspicuous ability, a hard worker, and an enthusiastic educationist; but it is asking too much of any man, however capable and energetic, that he should try to double the parts of Director and Secretary to the Minister. It is not desirable in theory that these posts should be united, and in practice such a combination is unworkable, and can only lead to inefficient administration. The experiment of giving a laborious routine of office work and the technical control of the school system to a single officer has already been tried and failed. Mr. Maughan should be given a fair chance to reorganise the system, just as the Minister should have the advantage of a departmental secretary, not necessarily an educational expert, to keep him well acquainted with all that is going on, so that he should not be entirely in the hands of the technical administrator. It has taken the Government a good while to discover that no better man than Mr. Maughan is available for the office of Director, but his past record certainly justifies the delayed conclusion in his favor. As already proved by him when acting as Director on various occasions, Mr. Maughan possesses the essential qualifications for the office. He has the academic status, the pedagogic training, the practical experience of administrative duty, the organising ability, and, above all, the broad grasp of educational principles, which are necessary for success. He is courteous in manner, tactful in dealing with difficult situations, and popular with the teachers who will come under his control. Confidence may be felt that he will spare no effort to bring the service into a condition of satisfactory efficiency, and that he will carry out with zeal and intelligence whatever educational reforms Parliament may resolve upon.

THE EDUCATION COMMISSION.

The chairman of the Education Commission (Mr. Thomas Ryan) is no longer a member of the House of Assembly, and there is a good deal of speculation among members of the House as to whose duty it is to move the adoption of the report—a duty which usually devolves upon the chairman. At question time yesterday, Mr. Vaughan asked the Premier if he intended to move the adoption of the report, but Mr. Peake gave a negative reply. "I do not think that task devolves upon me," he said. "There may be some other member who is anxious to perform it." Mr. Peake's attitude towards the report is so well known that comment upon his answer to Mr. Vaughan is needless.

Daily Herald Aug. 20/13