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VISIT OF FAMOUS SCIENTISTS

WILL TOUCH
POPULAR
IMAGINATION.

THE
PROGRAMME
EXPLAINED.

AN
ABLE
LOCAL
SECRETARY.

PROFESSOR
KERR GRANT'S
LIFE
AND WORK.



PROFESSOR KERR GRANT.

Photo by Mora, Adelaide.

Although far away from the old world Australia's wonderful progress during the last decade has steadily brought her within the orbit of the eyes of the nations, and her youthful voice is coming to be heard in the world's affairs. This is a growth not alone inspired by her peculiar interest as the buffer of the white race in the Pacific. The legislative, philosophic, and industrial progress of the Commonwealth accounts for more than the former does in bringing this part of the earth under the notice of other nations whose past is almost lost in hoary age. Australia is a Benjamin among nations, but no uncertainty marks the way she forges ahead. She has done much to enrich the world's commerce, and in arts and science she may do even more. It is a fine compliment, therefore, that such a body as the British Association for the Advancement of Science should select Australia as its next meeting ground, when not only British but famous scientists from leading foreign lands, men whose names stand out for world homage, will visit for the first time this somewhat topsy-turvy continent where the youngest race has established itself in very old surroundings. Australia offers a wonderful field in geological and biological investigation, since there actually exist here forms that elsewhere are but fossil remains.

The presence of the distinguished visitors who will arrive here in August is largely due to Professor Masson, who set the ball rolling several years ago, and in the interim the arrangements have been gradually completed. It is not an easy task to get so many world-famous men to-

gether at the one time, especially in such a far-away land as Australia, but it has been accomplished, and it is impossible to estimate the benefit that the people will gain by their presence. In all the States local officers have been appointed to perfect the arrangements. In this State the chairman of a most influential committee is Professor Stirling, his righthand man being the secretary, Professor Kerr Grant, physics professor of the Adelaide University. It would have been hard to have found another man more fitted for the post than Professor Grant. He is a lean young man of brilliant attainments, who is worthily following in the footsteps of Professor Bragg. Professor Grant is 36 years old, and on his shoulders much of the success of the gatherings in Adelaide will depend.

The professor is a Melbourne man, having been born at Bacchus Marsh in 1878, where his father conducted flour-milling operations. His father was a Scotchman of literary and artistic tastes, and from him Professor Grant inherited a similar taste for books, plus an analytical and investigating mind, which have rapidly brought him to the fore in Australia. Giv-

ing up the flourmill, Mr. Grant tried his hand at farming in the Gippsland district, where his son went to the public school. Gaining a scholarship, Professor Grant went on to the South Melbourne College, the principal of which was J. B. O'Hara, a man whose poetical gifts gained him prominence all over Australia. As a matter of fact, the professor's father and J. B. O'Hara were close friends, and composed a lot of poetry together. They were boon companions of the old days, and spent many a delightful hour comparing notes and criticising each other's poems. It was in this healthy atmosphere that the professor was brought up. "It was always my intention," said Professor Grant, "to proceed to the Melbourne University, and I went there in 1897 to study engineering. I stuck to it for a time, but discovered that my tastes were in the direction of pure science and mathematics particularly. I dropped the engineering, and in 1900 graduated in the School of Mathematics. I spent another year in the university studying chemistry and German, just as a kind of relaxation after the other, and then received an appointment as lecturer in mathematics and physics to the