

The Register <sup>-42-</sup> May 19<sup>th</sup> 1879

## NEW DEPARTMENTAL HEADS.

### Probable Appointments.

Few Governments have had to make so many important appointments in a year as the present Labour Ministry. The personnel of the Civil Service, in its more responsible aspects, is undergoing considerable change. New departments are being created; the old order of things, to a large extent, is giving place to a regime which has disturbed well-established traditions. The Socialist Administration is not afraid of bold departures in policy, and, presumably, would not object to an improvised bit of Scripture—"By their appointments ye shall know them!" The public has had a great opportunity to judge and, within a month or so, it will be amplified. Ministers have been busy—and are still busy—filling up the blanks. This year already a Chief Justice, a new justice of the Supreme Court, and another President of the Industrial Court have been selected. A Licensing Court under the new liquor laws has been formed. A Department of Chemistry, with a Director, has been introduced. There is to be a departure in the Crown Law Office, which is to have a Crown Prosecutor. Two additional K.C.'s have been appointed, and a Premier's department is about to be established in view of the approaching retirement of the Under Secretary. This is a long list.

#### —Railways Commissioner.—

But it is by no means complete. There are great changes pending in the higher branches of the service. At the end of June the Railways Commissioner, the Police Commissioner, and the Director of the Botanic Garden will vacate office. In addition, there are an Under Secretary to be chosen, a Secretary to the Police Commissioner, and later on a Secretary to the Minister of Education. Next year the Government will have to choose a representative on the Murray Waters Commission, and there are other appointments ahead. After the meeting of Executive Council to-day some important announcements will be made. The Minister of Industry (Hon. R. P. Blundell) stated on Wednesday morning that several vacancies will at least be temporarily filled. Mr. Blundell would not give any definite indication of them, but, no doubt, they refer to the offices of Railways Commissioner and Police Commissioner. Selections have been made. It is practically certain that, as mentioned in *The Register* on Wednesday morning, the Acting General Traffic Manager (Mr. J. McGuire) will be chosen to perform the duties of Railways Commissioner during the 12 months' leave of Mr. A. B. Moncrieff, C.M.G. The Minister of Industry was evasive when questioned on the matter, but he did not deny the statement.

#### —A Long Career.—

Although Mr. McGuire will be appointed Acting Railways Commissioner, it will not be a surprise if he should be selected later on for the permanent position. Feeling in influential circles is strongly in that direction. Mr. McGuire succeeded Mr. J. B. McNeil on July 1 of last year. He has been associated with the railways for 46 years. His first appointment was as a junior clerk in the goods department at Port Adelaide, under the late Mr. M. Doherty. Three years later he was transferred to the office of the Comptroller of Accounts, and subsequently to the position of invoice clerk at Port Adelaide. When the narrow-gauge lines were being constructed to open up the northern areas, he was appointed stationmaster at Port Pirie in 1876, under the then superintendent of the northern division (Mr. H. McArthur). After 13 years there he was selected to fill the dual positions of traffic and loc. superintendent of the south-east division, and was stationed at Narracorte, where he succeeded Mr. Martin (traffic superintendent). After a few years he was again transferred to the position of traffic superintendent in charge of the western division, his residential quarters being at Wallaroo. While there he saw the conversion of the Wallaroo-Mounts lines from horse traction to a locomotive line, and also the construction of the Blyth and Gladstone Railway, of which he was given charge as part of the western division. In 1895 he went to Petersburg as traffic superintendent of the northern division.

Few men were better known, or more popular in the north, than Mr. McGuire. He had a strenuous regime at Petersburg, and his zeal and unfailing courtesy were greatly admired. During his term of office as traffic superintendent the lines were all regraded to cope with the traffic, and he also had to contend with the Broken Hill strike and the carrying of water to that town during the famine. In 1910, consequent on the retirement of Mr. H. McArthur, he was appointed superintendent of station services, and transferred to the city. Altogether Mr. McGuire is considered a most capable officer.

—Acting Commissioner of Police.—

Sub-Inspector Edwards will probably be chosen as Acting Commissioner of Police, although the names of Inspector Priest, Inspector Bushell, and Detective-Sergeant Fraser have been persistently mentioned in relation to this office. The work of Inspector Edwards, it is stated, has much impressed the Government. He is in his sixty-third year. He has had an excellent career in the force, which he joined in November, 1877. Five years later, chiefly as a result of frequent recommendations made by superior officers while he was doing "plainclothes duty," he was transferred to the Metropolitan Detective Office, afterwards being raised to the rank of detective. In 1888 he was detailed for duty as post-office detective, and as such was often commended for the satisfactory manner in

which his work was performed. When he returned to duty at the Detective Office in 1892 Sir Charles Todd handed him a testimonial of a highly commendatory nature, in which he was referred to as "a very reliable officer." In 1895 Detective Edwards had charge of the Balaklava murder case, which resulted in George H. Lynch being executed for the murder of D. McPhee, and in 1897 he took charge of the investigation connected with the Streaky Bay murder. Detective Edwards had the honour, with Detective Mitchell, of being selected to tour Australasia in connection with the visit of the then Prince and Princess of Wales. Before the Royal visitors left they presented him with a signed photograph as a mark of their appreciation of his services. Inspector Edwards was prominently associated with the elucidation of the sensational highway robbery at Port Adelaide some years ago. His promotions have been as follow:—Second-class constable, November 1, 1879; first-class constable, July 1, 1882; second-class detective, March 1, 1884; first-class detective, a few years later; sub-inspector of detectives, August 1, 1903; and sub-inspector of police, December, 1904.

—Director of Botanic Garden.—

It is not expected that the appointment of the new Director of the Botanic Garden will be made to-day. The Commissioner of Crown Lands (Mr. Goode) stated on Wednesday that a communication rela-

tively to this matter had been sent to the board, and that no selection would be made for the present. Professor T. G. B. Osborn, lecturer on economic botany, vegetable pathology, and parasitology at the Adelaide University, is definitely mentioned as a successor to Dr. Holtze. It is known that there is a large number of applications for this position, and that they have come, not only from all parts of Australia, but other parts of the world. Professor Osborn will, it is understood, reside at the Botanic Garden, and, while exercising a sort of technical supervision over the work and specializing on the botanical side, will combine the new duties with those he is already performing at the University. If he should be chosen the Government may appoint as his assistant a practical floriculturist. The name of the Chief Inspector of Fruit (Mr. G. Quinn) has been discussed in connection with this appointment. The Government, however, may consider that Mr. Quinn's services are too valuable where he is. Mr. Quinn would be well equipped for the post. He was associated with the late Dr. Schomburgk when he was Director of the Botanic Garden, for seven years, and had 12 months under Dr. Holtze. It may be found advisable, in any case, to confine Mr. Quinn's abilities solely to the specialization in horticultural instruction, and to relieve him of inspectional duties and those dealing with prosecutions, which in the past have involved rather delicate difficulties in the general scope of his work.

—Professor Osborn.—

Professor Osborn was born on October 2, 1887. At the age of 21 years he graduated as a B.Sc. of the University of Manchester, and gained first-class honours in botany. After having spent a term in the laboratory of Professor V. H. Blackman at Leeds University, Mr. Osborn acted as senior lecturer in economic botany in the University of Manchester, and has since given many instructional and popular lectures in both general and applied botany. He had experience at Manchester in the construction and equipment of a modern botanical school, and made investigations

for private firms on the mildew of silk and diseases of the potato. Mr. Osborn was accustomed to deal with enquiries relating to economic botany. For four years he interested himself in military matters, and was connected with the Manchester University Volunteer Company and the officers' training corps. Valuable original papers on a number of subjects have been written by him.



PROFESSOR OSBORN.

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#### THE BOTANIC GARDEN.

From "South Australian":—"The proposed appointment of Professor Osborn calls for some consideration. The University and the State are equally interested in it. As proposed the appointment seems a sort of half-and-half equivocal one. Any director appointed will have, or should have, all his time fully occupied if ever our gardens are to approach, even distantly, that in Melbourne. The greatest objection is in taking the professor from his special work to the detriment of his University duties. Not long ago the concrete ignorance of the State as represented in Parliament was always 'biting its thumb' against the University, failing to recognise the great distinction and benefit Adelaide derived from its little University and small staff which has made such a mark in the great world of science by the work done by the late Professor Tate, Professor Bragg, Sir D. Mawson, and Mr. Howchin. Adelaide folk do not sufficiently appreciate the outside reputation of these gentlemen. Now Professor Osborn is a specialist in economic botany, vegetable pathology, and parasitology. Each of these presents an almost virgin field for research; indeed, in the first there is room for half a dozen professors with profit to the State to study the drugs, dyes, and other properties of our native flora. The various obscure diseases of cultivated plants also urgently need investigation to prevent heavy recurring losses. As to parasitology, the professor will admit there are problems for a lifetime awaiting solution. In attacking successfully any of these the professor would bring honour to the University and himself, and profit to the State. A man cannot, if 'stale' from teaching, or overworked, bring a mind fresh enough to undertake successfully abetuse research work; and this is one reason why more of our University staff have not been able to join the army of scientific researchers benefiting the State thereby. I hope, therefore, that the University will not further press this crude scheme, which militates against its own interests, particularly at this juncture, when an endeavour is being made to establish a school of forestry calculated to attract students from all parts of the Commonwealth. To remove Mr. Quinn from his present position would be a deplorable blunder; but, a head gardener being required, the former one, Mr. McDonald, ought as an act of justice to be reinstated."

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## NOTES AND QUERIES.

(No letter must exceed 500 words.)

### THE BOTANIC GARDENS.

From "Anxious to Prevent a Mistake"  
—"As a former resident of Melbourne, I should like to remind all concerned that Baron von Mueller, a thoroughly scientific man, had charge of the Melbourne Gardens for years, but they were never a success as gardens under his management. He retired on that account, and a scientific and practical landscape gardener and plantsman was appointed in Mr. Guilfoyle. He made the gardens the magnificent success they are to-day. When he retired, seven years ago, strong influences (as in the case of Adelaide at present) suggested the appointment of the Professor of Botany, Professor Ewart, to control the gardens, and his claims were vigorously pushed by his friends; but our Government steadfastly refused to countenance such an idea. Mr. Cronin—another thoroughly practical man—was appointed, and the gardens continue to be a beautiful asset to the city and State. Students of botany are always well served by (a) correct labelling of plants; (b) a specimen garden, such as ours in Adelaide (over near to the Botanic Park), and (c) the herbarium. The other parts and activities of any public garden should be horticultural, and for the people."