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bold.  
consequences, as divulged by statistics, from a national point of view. "The Gift of Life" is the title of another portion of the film which discloses the process of reproduction in a dignified and artistic manner.  
From Adelaide the films will be taken to Brisbane.

**Dr. Purdy at Barrier**

**BROKEN HILL, Today.**  
Dr. J. S. Purdy (Metropolitan Medical Officer of Health at Sydney) reached Broken Hill yesterday afternoon after having travelled from Sydney via Coobar and Wilcannia.  
Interviewed today Dr. Purdy said that he was on the way to Adelaide to attend the Congress of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science. He will stay at Broken Hill until Friday night. In the meantime he will enquire into general health conditions and the sanitation of the city.  
Dr. Purdy, beyond saying that he was favorably impressed with his first view of the city, would say nothing further until he had enquired into general matters.

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**RATS AND MICE.**

**Professor Wood Jones's Menagerie.**

In a galvanized iron shed at the rear of the Adelaide University, Professor Wood Jones, a recognised authority on marsupial birth, and whose views on the manner in which the young of kangaroos are brought into the world recently aroused so much controversy in The Register, keeps a few pets. There are rats twice the size of the ordinary rat so familiar to the public gaze in the days of the wheat stacks, and others with huge ears. In addition, there are two varieties of mice, and one sleepy lizard—all together a very creepy selection. These animals are kept by Dr. Jones for the purpose of observation, and are treated almost as babies, so well are their wants looked after.

**Almost Extinct Animal.**

The huge rats referred to, which are almost 2 ft. long from tip of nose to the end of the tail, are the kangaroo rats, now almost extinct, and came from the vicinity of Lake Phillipson. There are 11 of them, and their method of propulsion is on the same lines as that of the kangaroo—by means of their comparatively powerful back legs and tail. The rat of the long ears—they are almost as big as its head—is the type known as the "house-building rat," the name being derived from the manner in which the animal builds itself a big house of bits of stick. When completed the structure bears a resemblance to the wurlies of the Australian aborigines.

**An Ardent Carnivorous.**

There are five pouched mice, animals about three times the size of the ordinary house mouse. Put a pouched mouse in a house and it will clear out the others in quick time. It is an ardent carnivorous, and the female, beside eating those of her own type, also has the habit of eating her own young. The face of this mouse bears a great resemblance to that of a fox, with big brown eyes. One of the females in the menagerie gave birth to a litter of eight young about a fortnight ago. They are so small that they cannot be seen unless the mother erects herself against the side of her cage, all eight being affixed to the teats. The pouched mouse is exceptionally fierce, and it is said that they can even kill a small rabbit. The Jerboa mouse is another occupant of the menagerie. This fellow is blessed with a tail as long as itself, which it curls along his back, reminding one very much of a lemur. The sleepy lizards take no notice of any one, and true to their name, seem to spend the whole of their time in slumber. The menagerie, although small, is decidedly interesting.

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Received—Part II. of The Mammals of South Australia, an illustrated handbook by Professor Wood Jones, descriptive of some of the most characteristic forms of our native fauna. Part II, which completes the work, deals with the bandicoots and herbivorous marsupials.

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**BRITISH SCIENCE GUILD (S.A. BRANCH).**

**Report for 1923-24.**

The executive committee in its report upon the work of the Guild during the year 1923-24 says:—

**Australian Natural History Handbooks.**  
The scheme launched in 1921 for the publication of a comprehensive series of handbooks on the Fauna and Flora of South Australia has proceeded satisfactorily under the able direction of a special committee, comprising Professor Wood Jones, Chairman; Dr. R. H. Poffe, Treasurer; Mr. Edgar R. Waite, Honorary Editor; and Professor J. B. Cleland, Honorary Secretary. In the report of last year it was announced that the following works had been issued:—"The Flora of South Australia," Part I, by J. M. Black (Orchidaceae by R. W. Rogers) (3/); "The Mammals of South Australia," Part I, by Frederick Wood Jones, D.Sc. (4/); "The Fishes of South Australia," by Edgar R. Waite (6/). The following additional number was issued on June 13, 1924, viz., "The Flora of South Australia," Part II, by J. M. Black, p.p. 155-358, figs., 35-158 (5/). As the size of each part is limited, Mr. Black anticipates that two or more parts will be required for the completion of the flora. "The Mammals of South Australia," Part II, is now on the machines, and will be issued quite shortly. The author, Professor Wood Jones, states that he will complete the work in one further part. The number of each part sold to date is:—Flora, Part I., 369; Flora, Part II., 64; Mammals, Part I., 209; Fishes, 150.

Professor Howchin has submitted a first instalment of his contribution to the series, under the title, "The Building of Australia and the Succession of Life, with special reference to South Australia."  
The following additional handbooks are in course of preparation:—"Types of Vegetation," T. G. B. Osborn; "Seaweeds," Edith M. Osborn; "Plant Pathology," Geoffrey Samuel; "Tadpoles and Mushrooms," J. B. Cleland; "Spiders," R. H. Poffe; "Beetles," A. M. Lea; "Shells," Joseph C. Verco; "Reptiles," Edgar R. Waite. It having been discovered that, though written and published in Australia, the handbooks already issued, could not be sent at book-post rates, the disability has since been removed by registering the works with the Postmaster-General.

Favourable notices of the handbooks already published have appeared in scientific and other journals, both in Australia and elsewhere. The following extract from a review of "The Mammals," and "The Fishes," appearing in "Nature" (No. 2332, Vol. 113, p. 189) is of sufficient interest to be quoted:—"It is not necessary to insist on the interest and extreme importance to the biologist of the fauna and flora of the Australian continent. It is, perhaps, well to reiterate the oft-repeated warning that this fauna and flora are in great danger of rapid extinction. For these two reasons the South Australian branch of the British Science Guild is to be warmly commended for its enterprise in arranging for a series of handbooks, descriptive of the animals and plants of South Australia. Realizing the lack of inexpensive and authoritative works on the biology of Australia, which it rightly supposes is a severe handicap to the progress of science in that continent, and the need for a wider diffusion of accurate knowledge of this interesting and primitive biological community, the Guild has rallied to its aid the services of an enthusiastic body of South Australian biologists, who, between them, have planned this series of handbooks. The Government of South Australia, by its operation of a similar scheme established under taking the printing and publication. For this enlightened and broadminded policy, it deserves and will receive the thanks, not only of the public of Australia, but also of scientific men the world over. . . . The British Science Guild, the authors, and the Government of South Australia are to be congratulated on the inauguration of this excellent series of handbooks. It is to be hoped that nothing will interfere with the early completion of this valuable and greatly needed work."

**Inventions Board.**  
Further consideration was given to the proposal to establish a "Board to Encourage Inventions," as outlined in the last report. It was decided not to proceed further in the matter, pending receipt of information regarding the degree of success which had attended the operation of a similar scheme established under the auspices of the parent guild, London.  
**The Teaching of Physiology in Schools.**  
The question of the teaching of physiology received attention, as it was considered to have an important bearing upon many cases of malnutrition, of which there were evidence in this State. Professor Brailsford Robertson, to whom the matter was referred, submitted the following interim report:—"The teaching of physiology in the schools of South Australia has until recently been confined mainly to elementary instruction of anatomy, with a few assertions concerning function, unsupported by any evidence of an experimental character. The textbook set for the intermediate (i.e., junior) examination is very old, and is in reality an elementary text book of anatomy. Descriptions of bones and muscles which the children can obviously never see excepting in the school book diagrams are of very doubtful value, and the attitude of mind created by this sort of study is the very reverse of scientific. In recent years an effort has been made to gradually introduce into the school curriculum a number of simple experiments, which can be performed by the pupils themselves, and emphasis has been placed, in the syllabus of the public examinations board, upon the importance of inculcation of elementary notions of practical hygiene. Through the kind co-operation of the Department of Pathology microscopic slides have been issued to schools, showing various types of disease-producing bacteria, so that the children may at least acquire the notion that "germs" are not imaginary, but things one can see. For the forthcoming year the text book set for the intermediate examination will be Johnstone's "Physiology for Girls." This book contains an admirable introduction to modern ideas of nutrition and dietetics. Emphasis is placed upon hygienic principles based upon or related to physiology and anatomical information is confined to those facts which are essential to an understanding of function. It is hoped that as teachers become accustomed to the next text and more familiar with the simple illustrations of physiological principles which may be demonstrated to the pupils, instruction in physiology offered in our schools will become more interesting and more genuinely scientific, and that the information imparted to the pupils will have a more immediate practical bearing upon their own lives and those of the future generation, of which they will ultimately become the custodians.

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Copies of the following pamphlets, issued under the "British Science Guild Publicity Service," were received from the parent guild, London, viz.—"Helium gas and its uses," by Professor J. O. McLellan, F.R.S.; "Thermionic Valves and their uses," by Dr. J. A. Fleming, F.R.S.; "The discovery of manganese steel and its importance in modern engineering," by Sir Robert Hadfield, Bart., F.R.S.

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**HEALTH CONGRESS.**

The annual conference of the Health Association of Australasia will be held in Adelaide on Saturday afternoon. Authorities on public health matters will attend from all States of the Commonwealth, and during the following week the congress of the association will meet daily with the sanitary, science, and hygiene section of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science. On Saturday night, in the Lister Hall, Hindmarsh square, Sir James Barrett will lecture on public health matters, and his address will be accompanied by a most interesting and educational series of films. This series will be divided into five sections, covering:—1. The life history of the house fly, and the damage done by this "insect of death." 2. The rat menace, illustrating the danger to the community involved in the rat, and the methods of dealing with it. 3. Film illustrating the campaign against tuberculosis. 4. Magnificent film in two parts illustrating all the features of a campaign against malaria. 5. The care of milk, and a summary of all insect-borne diseases. These films have recently been shown in Melbourne and the surrounding municipalities, and have proved to be of great benefit to the general public. Admission will be free, and the executive of the association extends a cordial invitation to the public to attend.

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**ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION.**

One of the objects of the Graduates Association of the University of Adelaide is to secure to the community the full benefits of the work of the University, and the meeting arranged for Thursday evening will be useful in giving evidence of what has been done, and is still being done, by University men who are engaged in research work on the Rockefeller Foundation. Sir James Barrett is well known throughout the Commonwealth as a writer and lecturer on subjects connected with public health and treatment of disease, and he has consented to address the Graduates' Association on the subject of "The Significance of the Rockefeller Foundation." The lecture will be illustrated by lantern views, and the recently elected President of the Association (Professor E. Harold Davies) invites all graduates, with their friends, to be present. An invitation will also be extended to the visitors to the Science Congress to attend.

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**THE SCIENCE CONGRESS.**

**PUBLIC INTEREST AROUSED.**

The membership list for the coming session of the Science Congress is steadily increasing, and Mr. Keith Ward, the local secretary, confidently anticipates that by the end of the week the roll will total fully 500. Preparations for the meeting, said Mr. Ward, in conversation with a representative of "The Advertiser" yesterday, were proceeding smoothly, and it was hoped that Adelaide would equal in interest, enthusiasm, and hospitality the meetings held in other centres where the people had done so much towards making the gatherings successful. It was at first proposed to hold the congress in the month of January, but in hot weather conditions would not be pleasant. Speaking of the work of the congress Mr. Ward said it was desired by some of the enthusiasts to keep interest in scientific matters active all the year round. The establishment of a fund, and the appointment of a permanent secretary, so that research work could be conducted continuously, were among the wishes he hoped to see gratified.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF MODERN VERSE.**

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Lecturing before the Poetry Society recently the Rev. G. H. Wright said:—

Life proceeds by way of action and reaction, and this is true of literature, which is life as it is selected and shaped by art. The present reaction against the Victorian poetry is therefore quite natural. It means that the writers of to-day are living, and desire their work to be vital. Some may prefer novelty to truth, and others suffer from a strained originality, both in matter and form; in the main, however, the verse of to-day shows the demand for reality. Our aim in examining it should be to discern what is essential; praise or blame are subordinate phases of true criticism. The Georgian age has not yet produced any giants, yet the health of its literature is proved by the number who in spirit and craft are seeking to capture truth and beauty.

We cannot but note its variety and range of subject. Mr. Drinkwater claims this for the Victorian age, when it is compared with its predecessors. It is even more characteristic of the verse of to-day. Psychology has developed since Browning tried to get inside the skin of his characters; democracy has almost banished the aristocratic subjects. Our poets find their themes everywhere; some of them, it is true, prove rather intractable and refuse to be shaped, still the attempt is made. Mr. W. J. Turner discovers romance in the geography lessons of his boyhood; Mr. J. C. Squire in the rivers of earth; Mr. John Masefield does not despise cheap tin trays, though he has brought to light more precious cargoes; and Mr. F. W. Harvey links theology with ducks. There is noticeable also a fresh treatment of human relationships. Miss Charlotte Mew's "The Farmer's Bride," and Mr. W. W. Gibson's "The Hare," delicately portray the virginal soul; Miss Kay Smith in her sequence "The Last Gospel," and Mr. Edward Shanks's "Woman's Song," commemorate the death of love. After reading "Jealousy" and the "Menelaus and Helen" of Rupert Brooke—a Brooke still crude and fermenting, it is loveliness itself to turn to "In Those Old Days," by Mr. John Freeman, or to the same writer's "The Body." Very noble also is the portrait Mr. W. B. Yeats gives us in "The Folly of Being Comforted," in which we vision the kind of woman Mr. Norman Lindsay does not draw. In all this range of interest the poet is in line with his age; refusing generalisations he seeks to capture the manifold meanings of life, though at times he misses them through isolating his subjects.

Characteristic also is his preoccupation with the significances of daily life. Poetry to-day has been baptised with the love of familiar places, it senses the values in the ordinary and recognises the royalty of the commoner. The distinctive thing in our war poetry was its vision of the meaning of peace. Mr. Robert Graves, Mr. Robert Nichols, and Mr. Siegfried Sasson tried to penetrate the strife and its carnage, but the bird's song above the smoke found an echo in most poets of the trenches. Julian Grenell's "Into Battle" shows it, and the verse of Charles Hamilton Sorley. Rupert Brooke's sonnets voice the patriotism which is pure affection. In their work and in that of Mr. Masefield and Mr. Drinkwater there is a sunlight upon the fields of nativity which is worlds away from the gasconading of "Rule Britannia."

Let the poet avoid the speech which is merely a counter and seek language as sincere as his emotion, and life shows itself mated with its form. Mr. Edmund Blunden achieves this in his "Almswomen," and Mr. Martin Armstrong from a prosaic subject such as "Miss Thompson Goes Shopping," distils the aroma of the spiritual. Mr. Wilfred Gibson in his "Fires" and "Daily Bread" links the social conscience with his muse. The aim of these writers is summed up in Mr. Masefield's "Consecration." This interest is all to the good. Poetry is a strange tongue to multitudes, and conventional verse with its grandiose manner will never touch the many. But here is their own life opened to them, and it may well prove a stepping stone to the appreciation of deeper values.

Parallel with this variety of subject are the experiments being made in form. Free verse we note is only comparatively free; if the matter of a poem should dictate its form, and it should, absolutely free verse would be the chaotic expression of chaos. But life is never free. We have had degrees of freedom in Wordsworth's great ode, in some of Tennyson's songs, in Henley and others. But some law of rhythm is always found. The experiments of the Sitwells are interesting. Mr. Humbert Wolfe is also producing delightful work. Wilfred Owen tried the experiment of rhyming consonants instead of vowels. But the best kind of naturalness to-day is found in poems such as Mr. Squire's "To a Bull Dog" or Mrs. Fredegonde Shove's "The New Ghost." The line which is a finished gem is avoided, the poetry of such work lives rather in the total impression of the poem. Whatever experiments are tried we must remember that our greatest poets have found that the vast technique of recognised verse form offered sufficient freedom for the expression of any poetic emotion. Men like Mr. De la Mare and others can create new rhythmic beats within the old limitations. This is notably true of Mr. Thomas Hardy, who has marched so triumphantly from out the Victorian world into the Georgian, yet always sights the horizon beyond both.

Visioning the poetry of to-day we can say with Mr. Robert Lynd that "our poets are not a remnant, they are a nation." From their lips we may catch something of the trumpet note, as they face life, and also the whisper which bids Hush! as in worship they kneel before its spiritual beauty and its sacredness that abides.