

Mr. S. H. (Skipper) occupied the chair. After the loyal toast had been honoured, the President greeted the guest. He said that those who could not travel had the opportunity of being able to listen to one who had been privileged to take a trip abroad. Dr. Lendon always had the interests of the club at heart, and they could rest assured that what he had to relate concerning his travels would be of interest.

Dr. Lendon said that it was a high compliment to be entertained by the Commonwealth Club, over which he had formerly had the honour of presiding. It was evidence of great goodwill, for which he sincerely thanked them. On arrival in London, continued the doctor, one naturally paid a visit first to the Mecca of all good Australians—Australia House. At one time looked upon as a huge extravaganza, with its stone and marble, all imported from Australia, it struck him as being a splendid advertisement for the Commonwealth. It had a commanding situation, and a handsome facade. Moreover, it was whispered that it was not far from being a paying proposition. It was an excellent thing for South Australia to have a "live wire" like Sir Edward Lucas as Agent-General, and such a capable and obliging understudy as Mr. Whiting, the permanent secretary. Australia House was well worth going through; in the library one was almost sure to find Lady Cook, full of hospitable designs for one's women folk. There was another place which was fast becoming the Medina for devout pilgrims, not only from Australia, but from the whole world of science and culture. He referred to the Royal Institution in Albemarle street, so ably presided over by Sir William Bragg. Continuing, Dr. Lendon said he looked upon his friend as no unworthy successor of those great men who had rendered the institution so famous in the past. Given leisure and health to finish his present researches on the atomic structure of organic bodies, the complement to that work which gained for himself and his son jointly the Nobel Prize, he thought it likely that Professor Bragg might yet become recognised as the equal of any of his predecessors. Not only was he engaged in research himself, but was gathering round him a body of able research students, from all parts of the world.

#### Australia Ever Present.

Dr. Lendon, proceeding, said that he had not half digested his travels, but some impressions stood out clearly. In the first place one could not get away from Australia. All over the Medi-

terranean they met with the wattle, there called mimosa, and splendid gums and pepper trees. At Durban he was shown round by an old friend, Mrs. Norman, formerly Sister Foster, of the District Trained Nursing Society. At the Natal Club he met the "sugar king," Mr. David Fowler, who was a native of South Australia. A lady he met in the Mediterranean was born at Mitcham, but left Adelaide some 40 years ago; another was related to the pioneer who made a fortune in the Burra mines, and whose house at Prospect was long known as "Graham's Castle." The captain of the Cambridge Eleven mentioned that he played tennis at a hospitable house in Adelaide with one of his (Dr. Lendon's) family. In the High Commissioner's office hospitality was dispensed by Mr. Harold Ellison, who formerly lived at Glenelg. Through him, again, he was introduced to a Western Australian, who was educated at Melbourne. After the war Mr. Roy Elston served as a member of the Imperial War Graves Commission at Gallipoli, and he had written an excellent guide to Constantinople, Gallipoli, and Asia Minor for Thomas Cooke & Son, whose literary editor he had become at a very early age. Dr. Lendon predicted that they would hear more of Mr. Elston in the days to come. Among others whom he met were Sir Henry Galway, who still took a warm interest in South Australia, Col. J. H. Stanley, Sir William Wyndham, and Lord Novar, all of whom had been at some time guests of the club.

#### Sundry Reminiscences.

Proceeding, the doctor said a mining engineer who used to live in Adelaide turned up on the steamer Venezuela, and was intent on making a fortune out of oil in Columbia. People in foreign countries, he went on, were planting vines to an enormous extent. Who was to consume all the surplus from the Cape, from Algeria, from the Mediterranean littoral generally, let alone their own record surplus from South Australia, if prohibition gained ground, as some hoped or feared? When he was at Cristobal, in the Panama Canal zone, the United States naval manoeuvres were being held. It was estimated that some 200 ships of the Atlantic fleet were at anchor inside the breakwater. The manoeuvres permitted of shore leave every evening. It was remarkable that while hundreds of the sailors were to be met in the City of Colon, which was very "wet," no boats ever came to the adjacent wharves at Cristobal, which was "dry," although only separated from Colon by a line of rails. Colon was reserved for the Panama Republic. Again, huge liners carrying American tourists were in the harbour, but the steamers took the precaution to be registered as belonging to the Panama Republic, and were as "wet" as any one could wish. He was appalled, too, by the extent of forests of cork trees through which he motored in North Africa, but they would be relieved to

know that the bark was mostly exported to the United States to be made into the blameless linoleum. It was difficult to say which of those countries seemed prosperous. Trinidad (where their old friend Sir George Le Hunte was Governor after he left South Australia) was cutting down the salaries of its public school teachers; but if only Great Britain resumed trade relations with Russia it could see cocoa at a profit. At present the west coast of Africa was cutting in with cheap labour. Barbadoes, too, was grousing about its sugar. Sicily was trying to prosper by selling lemons at 6/ a case which cost 12/ t oraise. Beautiful, he concluded, as he found his native country in May and June, and well worth fighting for, he was happy to be back in South Australia. (Applause.)

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### MARSUPIAL BIRTH.

To the Editor.

Sir—Your valuable journal has been so kind as to allow me, as one who really thought he knew a bit about it, to question the finding of Professor Wood Jones in the matter. I am sure you will grant me the added privilege of assuring those interested in it, especially my numerous friends in the back country, that I am now fully satisfied that the observation of those of us who have trusted our own eyes does not carry us far enough, and that science has amply proved the fact that the young of the kangaroo comes from the uterus of the mother, and is afterwards placed by her upon the teat, or finds its way thereto. At the courteous invitation of the professor, whose kind and patient demonstration I desire gratefully to acknowledge, I accompanied my friends Messrs. Norman Richardson and Douglas Crozier to the University on Tuesday last, and was then and there fully convinced. Professor Wood Jones dealt clearly with the point that has been at issue for so long between bushmen and scientists. By the undeniable evidence he produced through the medium of numerous specimens he left us old advocates of the born-on-the-teat theory without a shred of a leg to stand on. Again let me thank him very heartily, and also your paper.—I am, Sir, &c.,

G. W. MURRAY.

Sir—Professor and bushmen should feel indebted to D. T. McKinnon for his practical research in proving the true course of marsupial birth, which I have not heard of any one else taking the trouble to do. Personally I am satisfied Mr. McKinnon has left no missing link in the true marsupial birth. It is only what hundreds had known, but had never taken the pains to thoroughly settle beyond a shadow of doubt. I have never relaxed my opinion that all marsupials are born on the teat.—I am, Sir, &c.,

A. DEVISS.

Sir—I have shot many kangaroos and wallabies for food and also for the skins, and from what I have seen I have no doubt at all that the pouch is Nature's womb for the young of those animals. I have often, when taking off the skins of the wallaby, cut the pouch open and seen the little dormant teat, or the joey the size of a child's thumb, inanimate and with no sign of life. I have pinched and pulled out of the unformed mouth the teat, which seemed to have its end in the centre of the joey's body.—I am, Sir, &c.,

C. E. PARSONS, Care.

Sir—I have had over 25 years trapping the wallaby and catching roos on Kangaroo Island, and have proved without doubt that the animals are born like other animals. I have taken three wallabies and a kangaroo from the uterus with umbilical cord attached to the mother. The reason so many err is the period of gestation is only a few days; the embryo is of microscopic dimensions until a few hours before birth; and the umbilical cord is almost transparent and dries and falls off immediately after birth. The reason the young animals appear to be grown to the teat is the teat is composed of erectile tissue which is passed into the mouth of the young after birth. Congestion is set up by the suction, which causes a knob to swell on the end of the teat, which is down the throat, making it impossible to pull it off without injury to the young animal.—I am, Sir, &c.,

EDWARD BURGESS, Cygnet River, Kangaroo Island.

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### MARSUPIAL BIRTH.

Appearances are sometimes dangerously deceptive. The fallibility of dogma reposing on the mere perception of sight, however, has never been better illustrated than by the outcome of the controversy relating to marsupial birth. The leaders of the bushmen's school of biology, who had expressed themselves as fully convinced that the young of the kangaroo is "born

on the teat," have at last been converted to the scientific view, that the foetus is produced in the ordinary way, and that, after its birth, while it is apparently in a condition of extraordinary immaturity, it is transferred to the pouch, and there attached to the nipple in such a manner that after a few days it seems to have grown there. No one who has seen a newly born kangaroo less than an inch long firmly adhering to the teat, need be surprised that the bushman, or the aborigine before him, acting upon the evidence of his senses, and reasoning from analogy, concluded that the young animal began its development in the pouch. He argued, quite rationally enough for an unscientific mind, that it was impossible to imagine the actual birth of so insignificant a creature, and absolutely unthinkable that this "little, shapeless object," even if extruded from the uterus, should ever reach and enter the pouch, or, when there, exercise intelligence sufficient to prompt it to grasp the nipple. And if this line of reasoning was not enough, said the bushman, there was the fact that no one had ever found an intra-uterine foetus.

When, some years ago, The Register, acting upon information obtained from Professor Wood Jones, published an article which it was hoped would finally dispose of the "born-on-the-teat" theory, the bushmen's chorus of fallacious affirmation subsided so rapidly as to suggest that the presentation of the case for the scientist had been effective. Within recent weeks, however, the controversy was revived with extraordinary vigour. Formerly, Professor Wood Jones had been content merely passively to represent the scientific view, and to allow himself to be the target almost exclusively aimed at by amateur zoologists. A few weeks ago, however, soon after the revival of the question, he was drawn into the controversy by a correspondent to a contemporary signing herself "Bushwoman," who was so confident that science was mistaken over the matter that she offered to give £100 to charity if Professor Wood Jones could prove his "theory." The professor accepted the challenge, and, at the demonstration attended by the representatives of "Bushwoman," produced an altogether overwhelming array of evidence of the scientific certainties of marsupial birth. Incredible as it may seem, in view of the production of Professor Wood Jones's specimens, and his frank and lucid explanatory statement, the committee of judges nominated by the challenger was unconvinced; and the professor's endeavour to benefit some deserving charity, and simultaneously to establish truth in the strongholds of error, was thus abortive—except that, when the result of the demonstration was announced, some of the disciples of the bushmen's theory became, if possible, more positive than before.

In the circumstances, Professor Wood Jones might reasonably have lost patience; and it is an admirable manifestation of the equanimity of the scientific mind that, even after it had been plainly inferred that, in matters of biology, he was an inexpert guesser, he remained as ready as before to place his probably unparalleled knowledge of marsupial anatomy at the service of any genuine enquirer. Although the question of marsupial reproduction yielded its secrets to science nearly a century ago, and although, to all skilled zoologists, the main facts are so relatively commonplace that it is unprofitable merely to canvass them, the professor's zeal for truth, the tireless zeal of the savant, sustained him, unruffled and smiling, against the utmost assaults of fallacy and prejudice. South Australia is fortunate that its fast-disappearing fauna should specially have attracted the attention of so eminent a scientist, whose manual on the mammals of this State tells us so much more about these extraordinarily interesting animals than

we knew before. Bushmen, however, are not in the habit of reading works of this kind, even though they be distinguished by that non-technical lucidity of language from which Professor Wood Jones never unnecessarily departs. Moreover, bushmen demand to see the evidence, declaring that books, at best, are not wholly reliable. It was in this spirit that two or three of the stalwarts of the bushmen's cause sought the professor in his laboratory one day this week. One of them, Mr. G. W. Murray, had very ably championed the "born-on-the-teat" theory in the columns of The Register. But he and his companions were practical, honest men, and their conversion, therefore, was a foregone conclusion. Not so inevitable, however, was the manner of their public acknowledgment of their former error. First Mr. Norman Richardson wrote to The Register his confession of a new faith; and then Mr. Murray, in whose frank and friendly letter, published this morning, Professor Wood Jones may perhaps find some return for his own exemplary patience and courtesy.

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### ART AND NORMAN LINDSAY.

To the Editor.

Sir—It is to be regretted that one, whose genius merits better exercise, should have taken upon himself to deliver a condemnation of an exhibition which, to say the most of it, is but an expression of the catholicity and freedom enjoyed by art. It is beyond contention that those sightseers will never profit, who confronting the pantomorphic idealism of Norman Lindsay's art, study its examples without sympathy, understanding and insight. That distaste should result is highly probable; for the curiosity and indiscriminate emotions which brought them there would only tend to make them transgress the propriety which is due to art in all its manifestations. Where there is neither the capacity to assimilate nor the strength to digest, those who have with avidity devoured all that arrested the eye and inflamed the sense are generally the first to suffer keenly the ill-effects of their degenerate appetite. Such sightseers naturally would not seek further than the limitations their senses permit, and blind to the purpose and motive that lie beyond, they behold a self-created mirage of misconception which multiplies into a veritable panopticon of Paphian grotesqueries, the very suggestion by which the artist would elevate them to his own aesthetic vision and so enable them to perceive the sublimity of artistic conception in unity with his inner spirituality. It is not by minuteness of criticism nor accuracy of observation alone that a critic qualifies himself to judge art; he must possess a warmth of imagination, and, above all, a delicacy of feeling. If it be otherwise, how can he possibly hope to adjudge the unimpassioned processes of a creative mind, and how adjudicate where his own mind is divorced by prejudice and ignorance from the noble ideal which is at once both the source and the essence of true artistic inspiration. It is only by sympathy and understanding that one may hope to comprehend the instructive quality of Mr. Lindsay's art. If this perspicuity be absent, the sense which enables the one to draw practical morality from any subject, suggests to the other the grossness and licentiousness which the soul of the artist happily transcends to the transfiguration of his art, and to the illumination of those intellects who ever seek beyond the borders of materialism the banners of truth and the torches of idealism.—I am, Sir, &c.

JOHN McQUILL.

Sir—Poor Mr. Lindsay! First of all there was the aesthetic gentleman who called himself "Nestor" and delighted us with selections from Keats's "Ode to a Grecian Urn," and mentioned Byron—the last of the poets who could prate on morality. I like his well-chosen simile, where he mentions, in some unknown connection, how America has "profaned" music with her foxtrots and such like. One might, with a little reasoning, say that children's comic papers "profane" art. Then there was "A Woman of Adelaide." Evidently a suffragette. Her grievance appears to be one of sex equality rather than of ethics; to quote her own words, "the men in these productions are all clothed and the women are naked." Another correspondent, E. P. Auld, is a boemastic writer, of the military type perhaps. What are the police doing, he demands. He asserts further that "boys