

Among those present were Professor Osborn (president of the Royal Society), Sir Douglas Mawson (senior vice-president), and Sir Joseph Verco (senior fellow). Professor Embree said that probably two of the most serious problems for future generations were the type of parents who would be allowed to reproduce themselves. Little had been done, he said, to see that each country was getting the best children.

**Welfare of Mankind**  
Professor Embree traced the work and ambitions of the Rockefeller Foundation, which, he said, was international in aspect. It was founded for the well-being of mankind throughout the world. Its activities were devoted particularly to medicine and the application of medicine to the public hygiene.

Dr. Wissler said it was his pleasure to bring greetings from Yale University and from the National Research Council.

He had found that all scientific teachers harbored the same feelings. Briefly, they were not paid enough; they had too many students to look after, and that too little money was allocated for research work. That gave a fellow feeling.

The best he could do, he said, to define anthropology was to say that it was a group of problems pursued by a group of people who called themselves anthropologists.

The main points to be considered were perhaps when man arrived on the earth, when he began his career, what that career had been, the transition stages, and the steps necessary to arrive at the present stage.

It was their object to ascertain the proper sequence of events. It was possible by scientific research. He was convinced that part of the solution of the evolution and development of man was to be found in Australia.

**Accumulating Knowledge**

Professor Osborn said it gave additional pleasure to welcome the visitors because their object was to enquire into research work regarding Australian aborigines. The Royal Society, he said, had a comparatively ancient history in South Australia, and had done much toward the accumulation of scientific knowledge, but much remained to be accomplished.

There was an enormous field for anthropological research in Australia. It was a healthy sign that eminent American scientists were taking an interest in the scientific phenomena of the Commonwealth.

Sir Douglas Mawson supported. He traced the history of the Australian aborigine, his connection with the primitive races of Asia, and the probable origin of the dingo, which, he said, it was thought by many had come to Australia from the vicinity of the Mediterranean. Sir Douglas dealt also with the means by which early man and his animals had reached Australia and had been subsequently cut off from the rest of the world.

Sir Joseph Verco detailed the history of the Royal Society and its formation in 1880 from the Philosophical Society. Before the Adelaide University was established in 1876, Sir Joseph said, the scope of the society had been more philosophic than scientific.

**Wealth of Material**

"We have a bewildering wealth of material for investigation," he proceeded. "In some departments such as geology investigations can be deferred for years or for centuries." Material in other departments, he added, had changed, and in some cases entirely disappeared. It was so in the vegetable and animal world.

"Thus it is with the aborigines," said Sir Joseph. "There are still tribes in Cennothing was known. What remained to trail Australia, of which practically be done must be accomplished quickly."

He paid a tribute to Dr. Frederick Wood-Jones (Professor of Human and Comparative Anatomy and for some years Anthropologist to the Egyptian Archaeological Survey of Nubia) for the work he had done. South Australia, he proceeded, was favorably situated geographically as a centre for carrying out research work.

The party will leave Adelaide for Tarcoola tomorrow. They will return to Adelaide on Saturday.

**THE ROYAL SOCIETY.**

**Sir Joseph Verco Reminiscent.**

**Blackfellows in Botanic Park.**

Sir Joseph Verco, Doyen of the Royal Society of South Australia, made some interesting remarks on Monday regarding the early days and accomplishments of that body.

In welcoming Dr. Clark Wissler and Professor E. R. Embree, the distinguished American anthropologists on behalf of the society, Sir Joseph said that just as he began to toddle about and prosecute his researches into the fauna and flora of the backyard, and the anthropology of his immediate family circle, the Adelaide Philosophical Society was founded at a meeting in the house of Mr. J. L. Young,



SIR JOSEPH VERCO.

across North terrace. Mr. Young was subsequently his esteemed schoolmaster, and his old scholars had perpetuated his memory at the Adelaide University by the John L. Young Scholarship for research. In 1878 he (Sir Joseph) became a member of the Philosophical Society, which in 1880 was converted into the present Royal Society. Since its foundation he had been a fellow, and had become in process of time its Doyen. He had the distinction of holding its Presidency for some 19 years. Those personal allusions were made to show that all the work of the society had been accomplished within the limits of one man's life.

Their objects of research were, of course, very numerous. Before the University was established in 1876—for it would keep its first jubilee next year—they were necessarily more philosophic and less scientific, and had to do largely with the ordinary affairs of everyday community life. But since then, especially since the establishment of the medical school, the area of research had been widened, and its quality had become more detailed and intense. In a new country like Australia, and in so vast a continent, there was a most extensive and attractive field for research, and room for almost any number of workers. They had, in fact, a bewildering wealth of material for investigation. In some departments, such as geology, investigations could be deferred for years or for centuries, and the material remained unchanged, but in others, the material altered with the passing years, and might entirely disappear. It was thus in the biological world, vegetable and animal; and unless the research were effected within a certain time the opportunity might vanish for ever. Plants and insects, birds and beasts, which once were plentiful, became extremely scarce, and some had completely disappeared. The shell parrots, which once screamed over the city in little clouds, were seen and heard no more; the flat snails, which lived in the parklands were gone. The emu of Kangaroo Island was extinct.

**A Royal Benediction.**

Thus it was with the aborigine. When a toddler he sat on the front door step, the blackfellows at dusk might be seen tearing at full speed down the road, so as to reach the safety of their wurlies and camp fires before Moldahub, their fearful Diabolos, should catch them; or, when sitting at the open window, a wide-mouthed, flat-nosed black would thrust in his head, stare with curiosity round the parlour, to his (Sir Joseph's) terror, and withdraw it with a grunt. He could well remember, too, as a boy the crowd of blackfellows in the Botanic Park, who

some from the adjacent country just before the Queen's Birthday (May 24), to get their winter blankets. They were in scores, if not in hundreds, and held their corrobories at night to his amusement and wonder. One Sunday afternoon when walking down North terrace a black woman met him and asked for a gratuity, and a sixpence was put into her hand. At once her husband, the well-known Tommy Walker, came up and held out his palm. To avoid family jars, he gave him a douceur, when he immediately struck an attitude in spite of the passers-by, raised his clasped hands to heaven in the attitude of prayer, and cried out, "Oh my dear Heavenly Father, bless this kind gentleman, for he has just given me sixpence!" (Laughter.) So he realized that day that he was living under the sweet influence of a royal aboriginal benediction. (Laughter.)

Sir Joseph said that happily anthropology for many years bene a favourite subject of study in the society. Fully 30 papers, some of them a hundred pages in length, and illustrated by numerous excellent photographs and plates, contributed by more than 20 fellows, had been published in the transactions upon the Australian aborigines, dealing with their location, name, language, legend, tribal laws and customs, mode of life, dwellings, implements, drawings and paintings; and of late their anatomy, their diseases and their dentition had been discussed and described in transactions and in other works. One of the latest of those was a thesis on their dentition by Dr. T. D. Campbell, which had recently been published by the University of Adelaide as the first volume issued under the lately created Keith Sheridan bequest. He was enabled to accomplish that excellent piece of work because of the material very extensive collection of aboriginal material which had been through many years acquired by the Museum authorities. But very much more needed doing on anthropological lines in reference to aborigines. There were still tribes in Central Australia of whom almost nothing was known; many of them had never but once seen a white man, who had stumbled upon them in his explorations, and practically nothing had been learned with certainty about them.

**Systematic Research Needed.**

Sir Joseph said they recognised that what remained to be done needed to be done quickly. Their experience had taught them how rapidly the blacks disappeared on the advance of the white man, and how readily they seemed to lose many of their remarkable characteristics and interesting peculiarities. They required to be studied also thoroughly and scientifically by persons trained in that particular department of science, and with some continuity, and not during hurried and spasmodic visits only. At first it was done chiefly by amateurs, by which he meant (without any disparagement) by men who did it for the love of it, and at their own expense and mostly as a recreation. How much more thoroughly could it be done if undertaken scientifically, systematically, and continuously as something not only to be commenced, but if possible completed. This would necessarily involve considerable expenditure, far more than their society's rather meagre income would warrant. And yet they would gladly welcome such an undertaking, or undertake it in association with the University or see the University undertake it. For it had already given evidence of its interest in Anthropological investigations. Dr. Frederick Wood-Jones, its professor in human and comparative anatomy was, some years ago, anthropologist to the Egyptian Archaeological Survey of Nubia, and had done much work in securing photos of Australian blacks, casts of their heads, dissections of their cadaver, and collections of their bones, and their implements. The University had published Dr. Campbell's fine thesis on the "Dentition and Palate of the

Australian Aborigine," and it had recently engaged a very intelligent and capable full-blooded aborigine to travel and collect all possible information among his remaining fellows. Happily South Australia was geographically very favourably situated to carry out such research work, both to the west and to the north, the directions in which uncontaminated and uncivilized aborigines were still to be found, and where therefore such work would be most satisfactory and effective. Happily too, it had the desire and the will, which it had already manifested to prosecute such research to the full extent of its means and opportunities. (Applause.)

**AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGISTS.**

**Received by Royal Society.**

Members of the Royal Society of South Australia and their wives accorded a reception on Monday morning to Dr. Clark Wissler (curator of anthropology in the American Museum of Natural History and Professor of Anthropology in the Yale University) and Professor Edwin R. Embree (Director of the Division of Science Studies of the Rockefeller Foundation

of New York) who arrived in Adelaide on Sunday for the purpose of investigating the opportunities of the various Australian institutions for conducting research work among the aborigines, and particularly to ascertain which institution is best fitted to carry on anthropological research in conjunction with the Rockefeller Foundation.

Professor T. G. B. Osborn presided, and in introducing the guests, said it would in any case have afforded them pleasure as a scientific society, to welcome their visitors, but it was an added pleasure to know that Dr. Wissler and Professor Embree were visiting the Commonwealth to enquire into the research work that was being conducted on the Australian aborigine. It had always been felt by the royal founders of their society that the blackfellow of Australia was a subject well worthy of their study. There was an honourable tradition of work in connection with Australian anthropology. He, as a botanist, knew but little about these things, but one could not go about with eyes closed, and he could not be other than profoundly impressed with the tremendous amount of research work that had already been done in the subject. (Applause.)

Sir Douglas Mawson extended a cordial welcome to their distinguished guests on behalf of the University of Adelaide and said it was interesting to observe that scientists of other countries were turning their attention to Australia in connection with their study of anthropology. In America scientific institutions were well equipped with all the necessary provisions for detailed and accurate observation and they welcomed their guests open heartedly, trusting that they would continue to give attention to those features in Australia. He hoped that the visit of Dr. Wissler and Professor Embree would stimulate the research work of Australian anthropologists and that it would result in a general advance of their knowledge of the subject. (Applause.)

Sir Joseph Verco, in extending a welcome to the visitors on behalf of the Royal Society, said he trusted that they had thoroughly enjoyed their journey so far, and that their stay would be a pleasure to themselves as well as to South Australians. Sir Joseph made some interesting comments regarding the early days and the work of the Royal Society which are reported in another column.

**"A Group of Problems."**

Dr. Wissler, in reply, intimated that he was the recipient of greetings to the Royal Society members from the Yale University, and to members of the National Research Council from members of that body in America. He added his personal appreciation of the opportunity of meeting them as scientific men, and expressed the view that wherever scientific men might meet they could always readily fraternize, irrespective of nationality, because of their common interests. All the scientific men he had met in Australia had made him feel very much at home; the professors had just the same troubles and anxieties as had the American professors. They all felt that they had too many students to teach, and that they were never paid quite enough (laughter), and that they were never allowed to spend enough on their research work. (Laughter.) If he could only learn to speak the Australian language he felt quite sure he would be extremely happy. (Laughter.) Anthropology was a difficult thing to define, but it could be defined in a general way (that might apply equally to any other subject) by saying that it was a group of problems that were pursued by a number of people who called themselves anthropologists. (Laughter.) The main problems of the subject were those they wished most to determine; when man arrived on the earth, when he began his career, what that

career was, what had been the steps he had taken to arrive at his present status and condition. He considered it was possible by scientific research to work out certain cultural horizons in anthropology, just as had been done in biology. A considerable part of the solution to these problems lay in Australia at their very door, and Australian anthropologists could make a very important contribution to the general knowledge of the evolution and development of man by a continuation of that research which they had so well begun. The various speakers on that subject had been extremely modest about their accomplishments, and he could assure them that it was a great encouragement and stimulus to himself and his colleagues, and he was only sorry that they could not take off their coats so to speak and help them with that very important problem. (Applause.)

**Human Biology.**

Professor Embree said that, in addition to the pleasure of having met the scientific men of South Australia, there had been the pleasure of meeting the ladies, and the "flappers." (Laughter.) Possibly the latter were present as anthropological specimens, or possibly as decoy "ducks" to lure them into the room. (Laughter.) The present occasion of inviting them to a reception and then proceeding to a discussion of scientific subjects was about the most American thing they could have done. (Laughter.) It was also typically American to assume that because they had