

ADV. 29. 5. 28
CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

LECTURE BY MR. C. T.
MADIGAN.

At the Institut e Building, North-terrace, on Monday evening Mr. C. T. Madigan delivered a lecture on Central Australia, illustrated by lantern slides. His Excellency the Governor (Sir Alexander Hore-Ruthven) and Lady Hore-Ruthven were present. The lecture was under the auspices of the Royal Geographical Society. Mr. A. A. Simpson occupied the chair.

Mr. Madigan said what knowledge he had of Central Australia had been gained during a three weeks tour in that area with Sir Douglas Mawson last November. He went to Central Australia with the object of inspecting mining property, and in that time saw a fair proportion of the inhabitants there. He gained a mass of information by questioning the people and collecting photographs. The pastoral possibilities and limitations of the country were known. At present it was reckoned to carry on an average of one beast to the square mile, and sometimes that one died. Before the cattle possibilities could be greatly increased it was necessary to improve the quality of the beast. The extension of the railway would stimulate prospecting. Nothing was known of the possibilities of the mining industry in Central Australia, and there was a great deal to be done in the way of exploring the mineral resources there. A map, loaned by Dr. Ward, showed a vast area of the country of Australia with less than 10 inches of rainfall. In Western Australia much of that land was being cultivated, and the growing of wheat was gradually being pushed out into the more arid regions. The rainfall in the south portion of Central Australia was 5 inches, and it gradually increased to 60 inches in the north. The feed that grew as the result of those rains was sufficient for the stock until the next rains, but the difficulty was in conserving water for the beasts to drink. About 90 miles north of Oodnadatta was to be found one of the finest spots in Central Australia. This was Hamilton Bone, where there was a large lake, and on which were plenty of wild fowl. Adjacent to this was barren land, which made the Australian desert no different from any other. Stony, bladeless land stretched for hundreds of miles. Approaching the Finke River was to be found a glaciated region, which scientists said two hundred million years ago was covered by the sea and icebergs. A remarkable thing at Alice Springs was that even after a drought of five years water was found in the river bed by removing the surface gravel. Horses would scrape the gravel away with their feet and drink. A slide shown by the lecturer depicted a number of black children, who had a craze for bowling old motor tyres in the same way as the white children, and there appeared to be plenty of the tyres available. The children, he said, were a valuable asset to the country. An entirely unexplored area lay for 300 miles to the south-east of Alice Springs, down in the corner of the State, and occupied by the artesian basin. No white man has been known to have crossed it. It was evidently waterless. During the drought season very few kangaroos were to be seen, and the emu and rabbit had disappeared. As soon as rain appeared the rabbits would breed again in a remarkable manner. There were very few sheep in Central Australia, because of the wild dogs and drought. Sheep could not feed so far from water as cattle. A geological expert could do much for the country in the way of finding suitable places for sinking bores.

The Governor moved a vote of thanks to the lecturer. He said no doubt there were tremendous possibilities for mineral development in the country. Before leaving England for Australia he had heard Mr. Amery's report on his world tour. Mr. Amery had remarked on the enormous tracts of land under cultivation, that 20 years before people had believed it was impossible to make use of. That morning he had paid a visit to the Waite Institute, and had seen the work that was being done there. He wondered if 10 or 15 years would not make a great difference to the country in Central Australia.

Dr. Ward seconded the motion, and Mr. T. E. Day and Dr. C. B. Chewings supported.

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THE ELDER CONSERVATORIUM.

CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT.

An interesting programme was submitted at the fourth concert of the present series at the Elder Conservatorium of Music on Monday night. In the opening number, the "Trout Quintet," Opus 114 (Schubert), Mr. Charles Schilsky took the violin part, Miss Sylvia Whittington the viola, Mr. Harold Parsons the violoncello, Mr. Carl Engel the double bass, and Mr. John Horner the piano. Each of the five movements was presented with a refinement of finish which suggested thorough study and careful rehearsal. The "Allegro Vivace" was treated with tasteful discrimination. Very pleasing was the "Andante," the figures of which were articulated with distinctness and at the same time restrained. "Scherzo Presto," with its bright and vivacious phrases, met with the emphatically expressed approval of the audience. The "Theme with Variations" made a quite admirable movement, and the final, "Allegro Guisto," was a fitting conclusion to a thoroughly satisfactory reading of the whole work, the spontaneity of which is one of its many charms. The appreciation of the large audience was expressed in unmistakable terms at the close. Miss Hilda Gill's popularity as a contralto vocalist was apparent when she made her appearance to sing three charming selections. In the "Apresun Reve" (Faure) she sang with her usual artistic understanding and invested the song with true feeling. "Trois Jours de Vandance" (Reynaldo Hahn) was sympathetically presented, the nice shading and expressive vocalisation being appropriate to the theme. Dramatic power marked the interpretation of "La Vague et la Cloche" (Dupare), which made a strong appeal to her hearers.

The concert concluded with an impressive performance of Cesar Franck's "String Quartet," D Major, which the programme described as "one of the most ecstatic works of art ever conceived." There are four movements, and these are sufficiently diverse in style to sustain interest throughout. The players were Mr. Schilsky and Miss Kathleen Meegan violins, Miss Sylvia Whittington viola, and Mr. Harold Parsons violoncello. The "Poco-lento-Allegro" movement introduces the quartet, and the "nobility" of the writing and the well worked-out scheme of tone values were made apparent by the sincerity of the playing and the sympathy of the instruments with each other. A pleasing fancy pervades the "Scherzo Vivace" section, which "has been described as a round dance by sylphs in a moonless landscape," according to the annotations of the programme. The description is not inapt, and the instrumentalists conveyed some feeling of the kind in their exceedingly fine rendering. An altogether charming "Larghetto" movement follows, and this was invested for a wealth of refined feeling which truly expressed the message of the composition. In the "Final," into which Franck wove themes of great dignity and power, the performers illustrated their mastery of interpretative art. The whole work was of an exceedingly high order of merit, and was thoroughly enjoyed by those present. The educational value of a concert of this kind is beyond compute, and it is a pity that Adelaide music lovers do not have more frequent opportunities of hearing high-class chamber music.

REG. 29. 5. 28

ANIMAL NUTRITION.

The investigations for scientific and industrial research at Adelaide on the nutrition and feeding of sheep are progressing steadily, and a considerable amount of information has been gained regarding the chemical constitution of wool. The form in which an important compound of wool, cystine, occurs in the various fodders eaten by sheep is also being studied. On such information as this a method of increasing the yield of wool per sheep per pound of fodder may possibly be based. The whole investigation has proceeded so far that the appointment of further staff is necessary. Applications are being invited from inorganic chemists, in order that the work may be extended to the analysis of bones, salt licks, mineral water, &c.

REG. 2-6-28

Asked how she had enjoyed her stay in Adelaide, Dr. Lammert said she had not expected to find the city so far advanced. She had been afforded an opportunity of seeing much of the scientific and research work being carried out at the University and the Waite Institute, and considered it of a very high order.

REG. 30-5-28

SIR JOHN RUSSELL'S TOUR.

No Fear of World Famine.

PERTH, Tuesday. Speaking on "Science and Modern Farming," Sir John Russell, distinguished agricultural scientist and director of Rothamsted Experimental Station, England, said that neither increased nor cheaper production entirely solved the farmers' problem, which was to secure a profit for himself. In many cases in England and Europe profit went to the middleman, which was a tragic spectacle. Achievements of science in agriculture were best summed up by comparing the prediction of Sir William Crookes in 1898, with accomplishments in agriculture to-day. Sir William Crookes said the world in 1931 would require 90,000,000 tons of wheat, which would represent the utmost that producers could do, after which it would be faced with starvation. The world now did require from 90,000,000 to 100,000,000 tons of wheat annually, but science had advanced so much as to upset altogether Sir William Crookes's calculations about possible production. Ninety million tons had been exceeded in 1911, and could be considerably exceeded to-day. Any fear of world starvation had gone, and the achievements of science were only at their beginning. The problem now before the world was to ensure that the farmer got his fair share of profit so as to encourage him to use all that science could teach him. Sir John left by train for Adelaide to-night on an Australian lecturing tour.

THE ADELAIDE VISIT.

During the course of Sir John Russell's directorship the Rothamsted Experimental Station has developed into a magnificent institution for the study of crops in health and in disease. The departments include those of soil chemistry, soil physics, soil microbiology, entomology, plant pathology, and statistics, all of which departments have made and are making substantial additions to our knowledge of agricultural science. Sir John himself has made numerous contributions to our knowledge of soil processes, and his book, "Soil Conditions and Plant Growth," now in its fifth edition, is an indispensable work of reference to all workers on the subject. Among Sir John's contributions perhaps the most interesting from the practical point of view has been his study of the activities of micro-organisms in the soil, resulting in an understanding of the inter-relationships of the bacteria, protozoa, algae, and other soil organisms. As a direct result of his work on partial sterilization important practical improvements in the management of glasshouse soils have been effected, resulting in increased efficiency in the commercial production of such crops as tomatoes and cucumbers, improvements which have been adopted in many cases by our own market gardeners in South Australia. In recent years Sir John has had numerous opportunities of familiarizing himself with international conditions of agriculture; apart from numerous visits to the United States and Canada, he is well known on the Continent of Europe, and recent years have seen him in Egypt and the Sudan and in Palestine. Australian agricultural workers are looking forward to the opportunities of discussing their problems with Sir John. His lectures in Adelaide next week, which will be illustrated by lantern slides, will deal with science and modern farming and the Rothamsted Experimental Station. As the accommodation is limited, early application should be made for tickets at the University office.

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GEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE.

The first meeting of the conference between Government geologists of the States and Professors of Geology at the Universities was held in the Education Building on Tuesday morning. Questions of common interest were discussed. The conference, over which the South Australian Government Geologist (Dr. L. K. Ward) presided, will be continued to-day, and will probably conclude to-morrow. The proceedings were not open to the press.

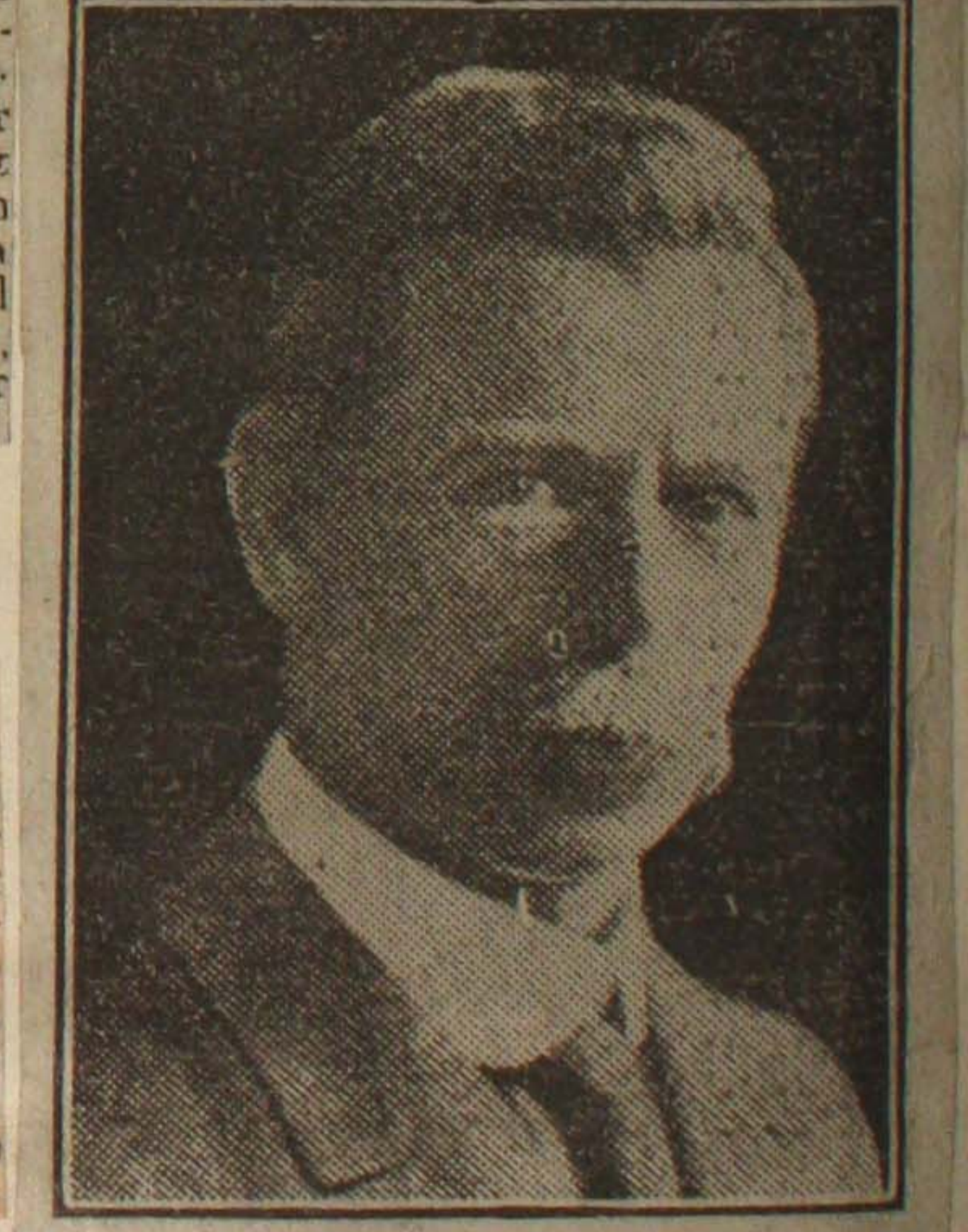
ADV. 30-5-28

The following delegates to the Australasian Universities Geologists' Conference, which opened in Adelaide yesterday, arrived by the Melbourne express on Tuesday morning:—Professor H. C. Richards (Brisbane), Professor E. W. Skeats (Melbourne), Messrs. W. Baragwanath (Victoria), E. C. Andrews (New South Wales), W. Nye (Tasmania), Professor L. A. Cotton (Sydney University), and the geological adviser to the Federal Government (Dr. W. G. Woolnough). In "The Advertiser" on Saturday we published the following references to some of the distinguished men who are taking part in the conference:—One of the most eminent of the visitors is Mr. E. C. Andrews, B.A., who has been Government Geologist of New South Wales for the past eight years, and is president-elect of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, of which he was permanent honorary general secretary for five years. Mr. Andrews resigned the last mentioned office in order that he might visit America, where, during 1927, he had the great honor

of being Silliman lecturer at Yale University. He is one of the foremost Australian geologists, has reported extensively on Broken Hill mines and on mining generally in eastern Australia, and is a recognised authority on physiographic problems. His fellow-delegate from New South Wales at the Geologists' Conference is Professor Leo A. Cotton, who succeeded the eminent Sir Edgeworth David in the chair of geology at Sydney University. Professor Cotton's visit is of special interest to South Australians. His father, Frank Cotton, who was for nine years M.L.A. of New South Wales, was born in Adelaide in 1859, and educated at Prince Alfred College, and his grandfather, Richard Cotton, was a South Australian pioneer. Frank Cotton was an engineer and well known as the inventor of a patent liquid fuel burner used in the navy. The Victorian representative to the Geologists' Conference was Professor E. W. Skeats, D.Sc., F.G.S., who has been professor of geology and mineralogy in the University of Melbourne for the last 23 years, and Mr. W. Baragwanath, Director of Geological Survey and Chief Mining Surveyor in Victoria since 1921. Mr. Baragwanath, born at Ballarat in 1878, is author of many memoirs on the geological survey of his native State. Another notable visitor is Professor H. C. Richards, D.Sc., who has held the chair of geology in the University of Queensland for more than nine years. He is a Victorian, 44 years of age, and a member of the Commonwealth Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. The professor has been chairman of the Great Barrier Reef Committee for the past three years, a member of the executive committee of the Australian National Research Council since 1923, and a member of the International Committee on Oceanography. Dr. W. G. Woolnough, Geological Adviser to the Commonwealth Government, was lecturer in mineralogy and petrology at the Adelaide University in 1902-4, then returned to Sydney University, and was for several years the first occupant of the chair of geology in the University of Western Australia.

REG. 1-6-28

A distinguished agricultural scientist, Professor Sir John Russell, Director of the Rothamsted Experimental Station, England, will arrive in Adelaide on Sunday. He was a passenger on the East-West express, and was met at Port Augusta on Friday by the Director of the Waite Research Institute (Dr. A. E. V. Richardson) and Professor A. J. Prescott. The party proceeded to Terowie, where they will be the guests of Mr. John Melrose, at Ulooloo. This country will be inspected to-day. Sir John will inspect the Waite Institute on Monday; and he will visit the Roseworthy Agricultural College, accompanied by the Deputy-Director of Agriculture (Mr. W. J. Spafford) on Tuesday. On Wednesday he will lecture in the Brookman Hall, School of Mines, on "Science and Modern Farming," and



PROFESSOR SIR JOHN RUSSELL.

on Friday evening he will lecture on "Rothamsted Experimental Station: How it Began, and What it is Doing." These lectures will be illustrated with lantern slides. On Thursday Sir John will visit Chateau Tanunda, Seppeltsfield, and Collingrove, and will be the guest of Mr. R. T. Melrose, at Rosebank, that night. On Saturday he will inspect the Mount Barker district, and the reclaimed swamps at Wood's Point, River Murray, where he will be the guest of Mr. H. W. Morphett. On Sunday evening he will join the express for Melbourne.