

ADELAIDE: FRIDAY, MAY 11, 1928

IMPROVING THE WOOL YIELD

The wool industry of South Australia has progressed a long way since the old haphazard days when the average return from a sheep was about 2½ lb. By selective breeding and careful attention to flocks, which have involved much hard work and the expenditure of large sums of money, the pastoralists have raised the Australian merino to a pre-eminent position, have almost trebled the average output from each sheep, and have placed the Commonwealth in the forefront of the wool-producing nations of the world.

Most of the work already accomplished has been along the lines of scientific breeding. New ground is now to be broken by a careful investigation into the nutrition of sheep for wool-raising purposes.

On this new branch of research work the Commonwealth Government is spending approximately £15,000 annually, and has expended about £12,000 in the erection of an extensive laboratory on Victoria Drive.

Prof. T. Brailsford Robertson, of Adelaide University, has been asked to control the investigation. With his staff he will take up quarters in the new laboratory in July.

In addition to the work in Adelaide, which will be largely of a laboratory character, there will be a number of field stations scattered over the Commonwealth, where practical experiments will be conducted and the results reported to Prof. Robertson. At these stations the growth and development of sheep in the natural pastoral conditions prevailing in the districts will be studied.

For five years the utilisation by animals of phosphoric acid has been studied at the Adelaide University. The new development will enable this work to be continued and extended. The distribution of iodine available for stock will also be investigated, and for this purpose thyroid glands from sheep in as many districts as possible will be examined. The research work will be extended in many other directions.

The Commonwealth Government is to be congratulated upon providing the money to make the investigation possible. No better choice than that of such a distinguished scientist as Prof. Robertson could have been made to supervise the work. If an average of only 1 lb. a sheep can be added to the output it will mean an immense amount in money to Australia, which already produces about a third of the wool supply of the world.

REG. II. ALSO ADV.
11-5-28

In Thursday's Commonwealth Gazette the appointment was announced of Professor Arnold Edwin Victor Richardson, M.A., D.Sc., of the Waite Agricultural Research Institute, Urrbrae, as nominated member of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research for the period from June 1, 1928, to April 11, 1931, at £500 a year.