

—Resolutions.—

The following motions were passed by the hygienic and sanitary science section:—"That the Governments of the Australian States be circularized with the recommendations of the section on sanitary science; that the medical officers of health should have special qualifications in public health and sanitary science, and should be whole time officers; also, that only whole time sanitary inspectors, with the certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute, or equivalent certificates, be appointed; that such inspectors, when appointed by local authorities, be approved by, and paid in whole, or in part, by a central authority." "That a separate chair or lectureship in hygiene and sanitary science be established in each medical school."

—Visit to Museum.—

A number of the delegates to the congress to-day paid a visit to the National Museum. They were received by the director (Professor Baldwin).

—Butter-making Experiments.—

Mr. R. Crowe (Government Butter Expert) read an interesting paper before the agricultural section on butter-making experiments. He said that unsalted butter kept better and was much less liable to develop the fault known as "fishiness." Unsalted butter contained a greater percentage of moisture than salted. During the last seven years the analysis for moisture of 13,193 samples of export butter had shown an average 13.84 per cent. It was worth noting that the average for the 1910-11 season was 13.82 per cent., when the maximum allowed was 16 per cent., while for 1911-12 the average rose to 13.91 per cent., when the maximum permitted had been 15 per cent. The average composition of Victorian butter might be stated at 83.5 per cent. butter fat, 13.8 moisture, 0.7 curd, 1.8 salt, and 0.2 boric acid.

The President (Professor David) then formally announced the close of the congress, and the council determined to re-assemble in Hobart two years hence. The Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science said Professor David at the conclusion of the congress, endeavoured to advance science by various methods. He laid great stress upon the value of personal contact which such meetings as the congress just concluded rendered possible. Research work would be started in consequence of the inspiration received, although it would perhaps not bear its fruit for years to come, and even then might first come to light far from the land which gave it birth.

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THE SCIENCE CONGRESS.

THE CONCLUDING DAY.

Melbourne, January 14.

The congress of the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science concluded to-day after a strenuous week's work. In an interview the president (Professor David) said the congress for the importance of the work accomplished and the enjoyable character of the visit had yielded to none in the history of the association. In view of the expected arrival of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Australia in August, 1914, it was a matter for congratulation that at this congress over 600 members joined the association. The papers contributed were not only of great scientific interest, but in many cases of considerable economic importance.

"Melbourne," continued Professor David, "is proverbial for its hospitality. The enthusiasm shown in this meeting is a foretaste of what may be expected when the leaders of scientific thought from the old world meet the scientific workers of Australasia in the great gathering arranged for Australasia in August, 1914."

Town Planning.

A paper on town planning, by Mr. Ashton Bremner, engineer of the Hydro-Electric Company, Tasmania, made out a strong case for better regulation and supervision by the national health authority of housing conditions. He said largely owing to increased immigration the development of towns had been chaotic in Australia, except in the case of Melbourne, Adelaide, and a few other centres. As a result it was found that cities and towns, upon acquiring additional areas, were put to expense in righting mistakes that should never have been permitted. In England, although much had been accomplished by the local authorities, the most marked changes had resulted from private enterprise, as at Port Sunlight, Bourneville, and Letchworth.

The Mount Lyell Disaster.

In a paper which was intended for the Science Congress, but which arrived late, Dr. Joseph Love, of Gormanston, Tasmania, gave some details of the Mount Lyell mine disaster. Describing the appearance of the men who escaped from the mine, he said their eyes were blood-shot, faces suffused, lips blue and swollen, and their gait tottering and staggering. They were hardly able to walk. They were violent and intractable, as if intoxicated with alcohol. In marked contrast with the men who escaped at the first alarm, who were quite calm and self-possessed, the last men who escaped were in a state closely resembling that of quarrelsome drunkards, and had to be dragged out of the tunnel by force.

Speaking of the rescuers, some of whom were "gassed" with carbon-monoxide, Dr. Love said their symptoms were muscular weakness, palpitation of the heart, with a sense of constriction in the chest, an inclination to resist authority and disobey orders, with an overpowering desire to be left alone and to lie down. Even men who fully realised the danger said they did not care to make any effort to escape. They had severe headaches and blunting of the finer mental powers. The best restorative was a few breaths of oxygen. A few bodies were lying in a contorted strained attitude, with purple bulging faces and staring eyes, intimating that they had been suffocated by the acrid, irritating smoke, or by carbon dioxide; but a far larger number were lying peacefully with heads pillowed on their arms and their bodies composed as if for sleep. In other cases they were standing over air boxes with fresh air playing on their faces but dead. Their eyes were bright and their cheeks were rosy and fresh-looking, with lips as cherry red as those of healthy infants.

Dr. J. S. Purdy, chief health officer of Tasmania, informed the congress that it was probable that the Transvaal Mining Regulations Commission for 1910 would be adopted throughout Australia as the result of the Mount Lyell calamity. The regulations would include the provision of at least one oxygen knapsack and pump, one air mask with light hose, and two oxygen breathing apparatus of the Shamrock or other approved type per man.

The Aborigines.

The following recommendations of the sectional committees were approved:—"That in view of the rapid disappearance of the Australian aborigines, it is urgent that in the interests of science further records and collections illustrative of the beliefs, customs, and manners of the life of aborigines should be made for public preservation." "That it be recommended that the general council should take such steps as may be deemed necessary to enforce the existing law to prevent the indiscriminate export of specimens." "That a committee be appointed to consider the best means of securing the efficient teaching of English pronunciation in Australian universities, training colleges, and schools." "That the anthropometric committee appointed at Sydney meeting be reappointed to promote the installation of anthropometry in schools and elsewhere." It was resolved that certain members should be entrusted with the arrangement of a deputation to the Federal Government on the question of the future control of aborigines.

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SCIENCE CONGRESS.

FINAL MEETING.

VALUE OF THE WORK.

MELBOURNE, January 14.

The Melbourne congress of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science ended to-day with the final meeting of the general council, which decided to send messages of greeting to both the British Association and the Australian Antarctic Expedition, as the next meeting of the Australian Association in Hobart, will not occur until after the visit of the British Association in 1914, and the return of the Antarctic Expedition under Dr. Mawson.

The following recommendation was received from the astronomy, mathematics, and physics section upon the subject of Australian longitudes—"That a committee be appointed, with instructions (a) to bring under the notice of the Federal Government the desirableness of its providing for the redetermination of the difference of longitudes of Singapore and Darwin, and of the differences of longitude of the Australian observatories from each other; (b) to communicate with the Indian Government with respect to the possibility of redetermining the difference between Madras and Singapore; the committee to consist of Professor David, Mr. Baracchi, Professor Mawson, Mr. Knibbs, and Professor Lyle."

The anthropometric committee appointed at the Sydney meeting was reappointed, in order to promote the teaching of anthropometry in schools and elsewhere. A sum of £10 was granted to the committee.

The council adopted the recommendation of the educational section—"That a committee should be formed to consider the best means of securing the efficient teaching of English pronunciation in Australian universities." The committee consisted of Mr. L. A. Adamson (convener), Professor A. W. Mackie, Sir Winthrop Hackett, Dr. A. J. Schulz, and Mr. J. J. Stables.

Cordial votes of thanks were accorded His Excellency (Sir John Fuller) for acting as Patron of the society, to the Commonwealth Government for its valuable assistance and grant of £15,000 to the British Association, to the State Government, and the Council of the University of Melbourne, the General Secretary of the Association (Mr. Maiden), and Dr. T. S. Hall.

Professor David said a deputation had that morning waited on the Minister for Customs with reference to the interpretation of certain clauses in the Tariff Act. The department was thoroughly sympathetic with all that made for the advancement of science, and both the State and Federal Governments were anxious to help in every possible way.