

Advertiser
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UNIVERSITIES OF THE EMPIRE.

THE RECENT CONFERENCE.

PROFESSOR NAYLOR INTERVIEWED

Fremantle, January 7.

Professor Darnley Naylor, of the Adelaide University, is a passenger by the Omrah, which arrived from London today. He attended the first session of the Imperial University Conference, recently held in London. In an interview with a representative of "The Advertiser," he said the conference was the outcome of an informal gathering held five years ago. Many decisions of great importance were arrived at, and much of the real business of the conference was effected, largely on recommendations of the Australian delegates. He regarded as of very high importance the decision to establish an Information Bureau in London, by means of which they would be able to arrange for an interchange of teachers and students throughout the Empire. He wondered why such a scheme had not been attempted before. The bureau would issue a year-book, giving complete information of what was being done in the various Universities. Hitherto, in order to find out how their institutions were faring, they had been obliged to consult "M. nerva," a German publication. At the conference certain delegates were in favor of the standardisation of teaching Universities in the Empire, but the proposal was strenuously opposed by a large majority. It was felt that each institution should be left to develop on its own lines, and in accordance with its traditions. Before concluding its labors, the conference decided to meet again in five years, and appointed a permanent committee. Subsequently, the members travelled through England and Scotland, and from what he saw he was convinced that Australians had no reason to be ashamed of their Universities.

UNIVERSITY STATUTES.

Executive Council on Thursday morning sanctioned several statutes and regulations made by the Council, and approved by the Senate of the University of Adelaide. They deal with the John Bagot Botany scholarship and medal, the degrees of B.A. and M.A., certificates of competence for music teachers, public examination for music scholarships, and the diploma of commerce.

SCIENTISTS IN CONGRESS.

GATHERING IN MELBOURNE.

THE OPENING DAY.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO BE DISCUSSED.

Melbourne, January 7.

The congress of the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science met at the Melbourne University to-day. The principal sections among which the work of the congress is distributed includes geology and mineralogy, of which Mr. W. H. Howchin (Adelaide) is president, and ethnology and anthropology, of which Dr. Ramsay Smith (Adelaide) is president. The various sections are quartered in as compact a ring of the University buildings as possible. The main event of the morning was the general council meeting.

Dr. H. G. Chapman (acting general treasurer) presented a statement of accounts, which showed that the receipts for the year totalled £1,415, and that there was a credit balance of £537. The amount set down in the research fund for the Mawson expedition was £225. The balance-sheet was adopted, and the alterations and additions to the rules proposed at the last Sydney meeting in 1911 were approved.

The attention of the council was directed by the Rev. Dr. G. Brown (Sydney) to an innovation in the official programme for the congress. He noticed that for Sunday next excursions were arranged to Bacchus Marsh and Beaumaris. He believed in a man spending Sunday as he pleased, but it was very different when such an announcement appeared in the official programme of the association. He thought it would deprive the association of a great deal of sympathy from many quarters.

Professor David said the association in the past had received valuable support from distinguished churchmen and those who sympathised with church-going. In regard to the arrangements for the British Association for the Advancement of Science, they had had no more cordial responses than they had had from the Church. (Applause.) They were not opposed to science, but were in entire sympathy with it. Why, then, should the association unintentionally offend those whose wishes should be most respected? He was entirely in favor of omitting any official reference to Sunday excursions, although if any members wished for excursions they might take them.

Professor Masson said it was far from the wish of the committee to cause any offence by mentioning Sunday excursions in the programme. Speaking for himself, and he believed for the other members, he could say the committee felt quite sure that as a number of members would be kept busy all the week they might desire to devote Saturday and Sunday to go about and see something of the country.

After further discussion Professor Masson said—"I understand, then, that there is a widespread feeling that while there is no objection to taking a Sunday excursion, if you wish, it is injurious to notify the public." (Laughter.)

Another subject discussed by the general council was the attitude of the Customs Department to the importation of instruments intended for scientific research. The opinion was expressed that apparatus for scientific research should be free. A committee was appointed, including Professor Masson and representatives of universities in other States, to deal with the question.

Sir John Fuller, the State Governor, recorded the delegates a reception. There was a large assemblage, including many ladies.

Water Conservation.

Among the reports to be submitted to the recommendation committee by the various committees which were appointed by the last congress to carry on an investigation into scientific problems, is one on the subject of water conservation. This embodies the results of extensive enquiries made by the committee appointed at the Sydney congress, and has been prepared by the secretary (Colonel Legge, of Tasmania). A perusal of publications secured from America had shown a diversity of opinion as to the ill-effects of the stream flow and the denudation of forests.

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THE RHODES SCHOLARSHIPS.

"Oxon" writes:—"In the leader on 'The Brotherly Spirit' in 'The Advertiser' last Friday you say it is questionable whether the selection committees in Australia are living up to the ideal of Mr. Rhodes, which evidently was that youths should be selected of the same age as that of those going up to Oxford from the public schools. You also point out that practically all the Rhodes scholars from Australia arrive in Oxford at an age when the great bulk of the students have graduated and left, so that they do not carry out the idea of Mr. Rhodes by coming into close association with and forming friendships with men in their nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first years, the ages of most undergraduates. Indeed, many of the 'fellows and tutors' are younger men than many of these Australian Rhodes scholars. The trustees of the Rhodes bequest, in the course of their annual report in January last on the work of the 147 scholars now benefiting under the scheme at Oxford University, state that 'the past year was characterised by sound but not brilliant work. The candidates selected, apparently, do not reach the highest type of scholarship,' &c., &c. How could they possibly do so if all teachers of Greek are like Professor Woodhouse, of Sydney University, who frankly declares:—"I'm not a teacher of Greek. I don't teach the Greek language as a language. What good would that do my students? There aren't enough openings for classical scholarship in Australia. What I try to do is to give them an insight into Greek life. My students may not be able to answer grammatical questions accurately, but they do learn, I hope, that a Greek play is not dry rubbish, but a real document; that it is, like any other work of art, made to give pleasure, with a by-product of education. That's what I aim at." It is fair to say that in the above quoted report of the Rhodes trustees they except the men nominated by the German Emperor in the last 10 years (five every year), whose thorough classical grounding and accurate scholarship they praise."