Reg. 23.3.26

SCIENCE INSTITUTE.

R. 23.

Sir Frank Heath's Recommendations.

The Need for Research.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Bruce) on Monday released for publication the recommendations made by Sir Frank Heath for the reconstitution of the Commonwealth Institute of Science and Industry, together with certain notes on these recommendations.

The recommendations are:-

1. The amending Bill foreshadowed by the Government in the Governor-General's speech should define the purpose of the reorganised institute, as follows:—

(i) It should provide for the training of young men and women in scientific research and for the encouragement of research workers who have already shown their capacity for original work.

(ii) It should be responsible for the conduct of scientific investigations into problems of importance either (a) to the whole industrial activities of the Commonwealth, whether primary or secondary, or (b) to the interests of Australian consumers as a whole.

(iii) It should encourage and assist under suitable conditions the solution of scientific problems of importance to particular States or groups of States which though urgent in themselves, do not affect the whole Dominion.

To those main functions three subordinate and derivative duties should be added:—

(a) It should act as a clearing house of information on scientific matters affecting the industry of the country.

(b) It should act as the principal and official means of communication between the Governments of the Commonwealth, and those of the homeland and of other parts of the Empire, on scientific matters; and

(c) It should become, as it were the confidence of the scientists of industry and science in Australia, the adviser of the Government on the scientific aspects of industry.

2. The Institute should consist of the responsible Minister, and the advisory council to the Minister. The council should consist of a Chairman and eight members; the Chairman and two members to be appointed by the Governor-General for a term of six years in the first instance and thereafter on such a system of rotation as may be prescribed by the Governor-General. The remaining six members to be the Chairman or their deputies of the State Advisory Committees referred to below. The Chairman and the two other members appointed by the Governor-General to be an executive committee of the council with the powers prescribed below.

3. The advisory council shall hold two regular meetings each year so far as possible at equal six-monthly intervals.

4. All proposals for the initiation of new researches to be conducted or aided by the institute shall, before they are undertaken, stand referred to the advisory committee for consideration and report in their scientific aspect, and the advisory council may itself initiate proposals for the conduct of or assistance to researches by the institute, subject to the powers of the executive committee. At one of the six monthly meetings in each year to be held on a suitably appointed date the advisory council shall submit to the Minister in charge of the Institute a programme of work and estimates of its cost recommended to be undertaken in the following financial year.

5. The executive committee shall have power to exercise the powers of the advisory council in the intervals between its ordinary meetings. They shall report to the next following meeting of the advisory council any action they have taken on behalf of the council.

6. The executive committee, in their discretion, either postpone consideration of any matter referred to them until the next ordinary meeting of the council, or summon a special meeting of the council to consider the matter and do so. The executive committee shall be responsible for recommending to the Minister from income of the fund referred to below the allocation of grants to students worthy of being trained in research and grants for the assistance of research workers of proved capacity. The executive committee shall have power to make recommendations or to reach other decisions by a majority of votes, the chairman shall have a casting vote.

6. Each State of the Commonwealth shall be invited to nominate for appointment by the Governor-General a State advisory committee, whose duty it shall be to make recommendations to the advisory council for aid from the institute for the conduct of scientific researches and investigations bearing upon the industries of the State. It shall be the duty of such a State advisory committee to exercise a general supervision over the field researches or investigations conducted by the State, and to act as the agent of the Commonwealth in the disbursement of the funds both central and local, to meet their cost, subject to the approval of the institute.

7. For more State advisory committees may combine to propose a research or investigation, and to exercise through a mutually constituted joint subcommittee general supervision of any research or investigation aided by the institute and conducted within the borders of any one of the contributory States. Local funds provided by the Government of a State, or from other local sources, will constitute the State a contributory State within the meaning of this recommendation.

8. A State advisory committee, shall include two members to be nominated by the State Government from among their scientific staff, two representatives of the State University to be nominated by the National Research Council after the State Government has made its nominations and two representatives of the principal industries of the State the State to be nominated in such a manner as the industries may determine in consultation with the responsible Minister of the Institute. A State advisory committee may be selected from among the members of any existing Government or advisory board connected with a State Government, subject to the approval of the responsible Minister of the Institute.

9. Within six months of the appointment of each State advisory committee, they shall elect one of their number to be Chairman of the committee. The Chairman and members of the State advisory committees shall hold office for such period as the responsible Minister may by regulation determine.

10. The Chairman of a State advisory committee shall be ex officio a member of the advisory council of the institute unless he be in receipt of a salary from the Commonwealth, and in that case all advisory committee shall nominate some other of their members not being a salaried officer of the Commonwealth Government, the Governor-General to be a member of the advisory council during such period as the Chairman of the State advisory committee is disqualified from sitting.

11. The Governor-General may appoint a secretary to the institute, who to be the chief executive and accounting officer to the institute. The secretary of the institute shall also be secretary to the advisory council. The Governor-General may appoint an officer in each State as members of the staff of the institute to be the secretary of the State advisory committee of that State. The secretaries of the State advisory committees shall be sub-accounting officers for the expenditure of institute funds granted in aid of the State investigations and researches.

12. The institute shall establish under the charge of special scientific officers:—(a) An agricultural research institute; (b) which there shall in the first instance be formed a dairy research institute; (b) a pastoral research; (c) a forestry and forest products section; (d) a fish section; (e) a fisheries section and (f) such other specialised sections the Governor-General may from time to time determine. Such research institutes shall be attached to such seats of learning as the Minister may from time to time determine.

13. The institute to be constituted a corporate body under the terms of the present Act, consisting of the Prime Minister for the time being and his advisory council under the title of the Department of Research in Science and Industry, but that it shall not be a part of the Prime Minister's Department.

14. The provisions of the present Act, not affected by these recommendations to be retained mutatis mutandis.

15. The funds under either in the amending Bill, or by charter for the establishment of a holding trust (entitled the Commonwealth Institute for encouragement of research in science and industry) to which will be paid the sum of £1,000,000, the income of which is dedicated in perpetuity to the training of promising young Australians in research and to the encouragement of research workers of proved capacity, in accordance with the directions of the responsible Minister. The trustees to be three Commonwealth Ministers.

Notes on Recommendations.

To his recommendations Sir Frank Heath adds certain notes regarding them. In the foreword to these notes he points out that it is obvious that useful contributions to the welfare of Homeland and the Commonwealth in scientific work must depend upon the existence in the dominion of a well-organised and well-equipped organization operating on national lines, co-operating with all promising and efficient agencies and institutions, and ready to act as the authoritative source of information and action in all matters in which co-operation with the Homeland is likely to be helpful. In regard to the training of young scientific workers in research, there is encouragement in independent workers, Sir Frank points out that he found everywhere in Australia promising and useful workers, and that while lack of funds was a handicap, the encouragement offered was to find men suitable for the work of scientific research. Australian universities are turning out men in larger numbers than can be absorbed into suitable occupations, but these young graduates, however well equipped in existing knowledge, cannot be expected to know how to attack new problems unless they have been trained in the methods of scientific investigation. Regarding the conduct of scientific researches into problems of national, as distinct from State or local importance, Sir Frank Heath counsels the Government that in the interests of science, as well as of industry, it is better not to begin an investigation at all than to begin it with second-rate men. The first requirement is to find well-equipped leaders. Dealing with his recommendations, No. 2 to 10, Sir Frank Heath points out that while the series of recommendations leads to highly centralized control, there is in democratic communities in normal times an impatience of overman control—an impatience likely to be emphasised when the activities of the organization it is sought to create must operate within the boundaries, and for the benefit, or for the revenue of a number of foreign States. If it is to be successful it must secure the active co-operation of these States and their peoples, on the basis of the proposed reorganization; therefore, is sought in a co-operation of the States with the Commonwealth in the formulation of advice through carefully selected men. In view of the importance and responsibility of the duties suggested for the executive committee, it is proposed that they should each receive a substantial honorarium to £500 a year for their services.

In his notes Sir Frank enlarges on the recommendations contained in paragraph 12, and stresses the necessity for the establishment of a Bureau of Agriculture. One of the first investigations undertaken by this department should be the formation of a dairy research institute, as in Australia the dairy industry has been developed in connection with dairying than with any other branch of agriculture, notwithstanding the fact that during the last five years dairying in bulk production has expanded more than the wheat or wool industries.

The Dairy Institute, Sir Frank Heath thinks, should be established in Victoria, because the bulk of the dairy work of the food section, the meat division of the food section might be located in Queensland, the dairy industry in New South Wales, the silvicultural division of forestry and forest products at Canberra, the minor forests products in Victoria, tannin, and wood pulp at Adelaide, a division for wood waste in Western Australia, whence the largest export of timber is made, and the greatest losses from waste experienced, and a division for seasoning and preservation in Queensland. Fisheries research might be centred in Tasmania. There is necessity for particular attention being paid to the problems of better and more cheaply produced wool. Research in forest products should be based on the experience of the trained forester rather than on that of the lumber man, the forester being a product of Australia, should not only be entirely self-contained in timber, but be a large exporter of timber.

Sir Frank Heath suggests for the consideration of the Federal Government the establishment of a Scientific Commissioner's Office in London of a scientific post to be filled by a well qualified man, who would have duties in relation to the relations of scientific progress and policy. Sir Frank estimated that the cost to Australia of the Institute as outlined would be £40,000 for the first full year, rising to about £50,000 in the second year, and probably in the course of time to a maximum of £100,000 annually.

News 24-3-26

CHAMBER MUSIC

Adelaide Asked to Lead

Members of the Elder Conservatorium String Quartet have been approached in many quarters with requests to give a series of Chamber Music Concerts similar to those which were given last winter in the Liberal Hall, and which gave great pleasure to those who heard them.

It has been mentioned regarding the intentions of the Quartet, that a letter from Mr. Charles Schilsky, the leader of the quartet, said:—"We are willing to give concerts similar to those of last winter, if people want them, and if they are willing to pay a little more than we received for our best and be out of pocket by it. There are certain expenses which are unavoidable, and if the concerts are to be given the public must bear those expenses. We will do the rest."

To test the feeling of genuine music lovers, Mr. Schilsky proposes that those who are willing to guarantee the purchase of a season ticket (which will admit two) should send in their names to the secretary. Two hundred and fifty subscribers of £1 1/ will guarantee that the concerts will be given. Mr. Schilsky stresses the fact that no money should be sent to him, only the names of patrons.

It is to be hoped that in the interests of musical culture, in which Adelaide is supposed to lead, that the concerts will be given, though some of the chamber music comprises much of the genuine musical composition, and can be heard only through repetition, a combination as the quartet provides.

Reg. 23.3.26

Tonight at 8 o'clock Mr. A. E. M. Kirwood will, in the lecture room, Institute Building, North Terrace, lecture on "Australian literature." The lecture is one of the Workers' Educational Association, Adelaide Branch, and of the United Licensed Victuallers' Association, and the lecture will be held in the Exchange Hotel to-night.

Adv. 24.3.26

GENERAL NEWS.

R 24

GOVERNMENT HOUSE GROUNDS.

The suggestion by Professor E. Harold Davies, in a special article in "The Advertiser," that a portion of Government House grounds might be utilised as an auditorium for concerts and other purposes was referred to by the Attorney-General (Hon. W. J. Denny) yesterday. The Minister expressed general approval of the ideas of the writer that more should be done towards the encouragement of art, and remarked that in all civilised countries music and the drama were subsidised. There was no insuperable objection to the suggestion that the eastern corner of Government House domain, near Kintore-avenue and North-terrace, should be utilised in the manner proposed. When the Government decided to convert Government House grounds from their present purpose, a proposal that the City Council might erect a new town hall there was made, and the Government had always been willing to negotiate with the council on this question. Similarly they would be prepared to consider Professor Davies's proposal, but a new residence would be secured. Now that the work of widening King William-road has been practically completed, and the supervision of the city engineer (Mr. R. M. Scott), a start has been made with the erection of a suitable fence that will give privacy of the occupants of Government House, may be further interfered with. The fence will stand about ten feet behind the retaining wall, which is to be placed there by the department of the Superintendent of Public Buildings. The space in between is to be sodded and planted with grass. At the entrance to the grounds stone pillars are being erected. Later on the old gateways, the eastern one of which has been demolished, will be completed for the use of police officers who patrol the entrance.

SCATTERED SHOWERS ON THE COAST.

Cool weather is expected to prevail today, with some scattered light showers along the coast and in the eastern districts. The Government Meteorologist reported last night:—"Under the influence of tropical storm, further rains of a light to heavy character were reported this morning generally in the eastern parts of the and scattered places in the upper division of the Northern Territory and southward to Oodnadatta and Marree. Light to heavy rains were recorded over the south-east, and fair to moderate in the western districts of Queensland, and heavy falls over the Riverina in New South Wales, and light to heavy elsewhere in that State except in the north-west. In Victoria experienced moderate to heavy rain in Gippsland, and very light to fair showers where, recorded in other parts of the State. Some isolated very light showers were recorded, this morning in the lower south-east of South Australia, and light showers and further light showers in the far west and up north. Conditions were mostly cool in this State. Extreme minimum temperatures ranging from 0 degrees at Cape Northumberland to 8 degrees at Port Augusta, with the extreme inland minimum 60.1 and 7.2 degrees. During the day pressure has fallen over the south-eastern quarter of the Commonwealth, and unsettled weather is likely to continue there. The tropical storm is passing eastward into Queensland, and unsettled weather is likely to become fine in the far interior and Northern Territory by Wednesday. With anticyclonic pressure prevailing still along the ocean, but decreased pressure to the east, conditions in South Australia will be cool under southerly winds, and some scattered light showers along the coast and over eastern districts, but clear wise fine."

News 22-3-26

AUSTRALIAN HISTORY

Recognition by University

N. 22

Melbourne University is the first Australian university to make a separate subject of "Australian history" in its curriculum for the Arts degree. The Faculty of Arts there is the pioneer in this movement, it has altered its curriculum set for the school of history and political science by abolishing the study of sociology and substituting a series of lectures on Australian history. Professor Scott will be the lecturer, and will inaugurate the course in 1927. Australian history will form part of the final honors' examination in February, 1928.

So far to move has been made in this direction by the University of Adelaide