

The Sanitary Congress at Bradford.

The Twenty-first Congress convened last week by the Sanitary Institute at Bradford passed off with great success. The Earl of Stamford, who presided, said, amongst other nice things, that the Institute represented one of the largest voluntary efforts for advancing the knowledge of hygiene. Since its formation in 1876 it had kept pace with the enormous strides made by hygiene in the past quarter of a century, and from small beginnings had grown to a society numbering three thousand members and associates spread throughout the civilised world. The object for which it was founded was the diffusion of sanitary knowledge, and the channels through which it sought to accomplish that work were many and various—lectures, discussions, experiments, examinations, exhibitions, congresses, and publications in every continent of the world. The meetings held under its auspices last year numbered nearly five hundred, and the total attendances at these meetings were more than fifty thousand.

NEED OF SPECIAL EDUCATION.

Of paramount importance for the cure of present defects was the education of the country at large as to its responsibility for the existence of those defects. If by some organised crusade the working classes could be induced to learn this lesson, the power of their votes would speedily accelerate the wheels of the legislative machine. As yet we had not made any real attempt to inaugurate on national lines a system of hygienic instruction. The American people had recognised that a real educational system was the most important factor, and in attaining such a system they had further recognised that physical development was as essential as mental growth. It was not sufficient that the child should be taught merely to observe certain hygienic regulations; it must understand the reasons, and these could only be efficiently taught by teachers specially trained in the science and practice of hygiene. It was along the lines initiated by the American people that, in the opinion of educational experts here, England was destined to advance, and it was the special duty of the members of the Institute to see that the science of sanitation occupied a prominent position in our system of national education. The Factory Acts should be amended so as to ensure that all workshops should be subject to inspection and control. He wished to emphasise his strong sense of the value of combining voluntary and official effort in sanitary administration. His connection for the last two years with the Metropolitan Asylums Board had proved to him that this combination could be made to work most smoothly and efficiently. The first duty before them was to advance the general intelligence of the nation to a just appreciation of the supreme value of its chief asset—public health.

THE WORK OF THE SECTIONS.

There were no fewer than eight sections at work—municipal, medical, engineering and surveying, sanitary inspection, veterinary inspection, and industrial and school hygiene, in the majority of which many able papers were read and discussed, and several most useful resolutions were passed. Amongst these it was agreed

that there should be a Minister of Public Health with a seat in the Cabinet.

"Some of the disinfecting preparations now sold are not only worthless but actually dangerous," declared a speaker. Thereupon a resolution was passed asking for the appointment of a committee to inquire into the desirability of establishing a standard bacteriological method for determining the efficiency of disinfectants.

A resolution to the effect that whenever preservatives are added to food their presence, nature, and maximum amount should be indicated on the label or otherwise declared, was next agreed to.

A resolution urging the Government to deal more rigorously with tramps was also carried.

THE TEACHING OF HYGIENE TO GIRLS.

Miss S. L. Beszant, head-mistress of the Belle Vue Girls' School, Bradford, contributed a paper on "The Teaching of Hygiene," in the course of which she said the upper part of Belle Vue Board School had been a science school (now called a secondary school) for six years. Seeing that the teaching of human physiology and hygiene had been a feature of the school previously, it was decided to experiment with the teaching of practical physiology as a suitable subject for girls in place of practical physics. The subject had been treated in a scientific manner: the girls experiment, observe, draw inferences, and make their own summaries. The rabbit and frog supply plenty of material, and an intelligent butcher supplements from the slaughter-houses. The laboratory has been so constructed that the necessary physics and chemistry can be taken. The subject is popular with the girls, and no squeamishness or hysteria is shown at the sight of blood, or of a simple dissection.

The preparation of vegetable and animal food and beverages was taught according to the same plan, a Bunsen burner and a few test tubes affording sufficient apparatus to illustrate the basic scientific principles. Each day's cooking lesson in the Bradford schools included the cooking of animal food, vegetables, and one sweet, so that the cookery did not consist of the making of cakes and toffee. The teaching of practical cookery had been much appreciated by parents, who had frequently testified to the benefit they had derived from the instruction given. The Bradford School Board were now making preparations for the teaching of practical housewifery in a small house attached to a new school in Green Lane; this, together with laundry and cookery at the same centre, would be in operation during the visit of the Congress to Bradford.

A New German Discovery.

There would seem to be room in India for a new German discovery at present in operation at the Wiesbaden waterworks, by means of which the water is rendered entirely free from pathogenic germs by means of ozone generated by electrical discharges in an apparatus composed of metallic tubes. The ozone passes upwards through coarse gravel contained in towers through which the water flows downwards, arriving at the bottom perfectly germless. The cost of this process is 1.12d. per 1,000 gallons. As water grows less pure in India the longer it is stored in tanks or reservoirs, such a mode of purification is worth the attention of sanitarians.

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