

CHEAPENING INSULIN

There can be no question as to the great usefulness of the work which Professor T. Brailsford Robertson (Professor of Physiology and Bio-chemistry) is carrying on at the University, in seeking to cheapen the production of insulin. That preparation, as everyone knows, is a cure for the terrible and hitherto incurable disease, diabetes. Perhaps it should be said that it is not precisely a cure, because it does not restore the diseased pancreas to healthy action, but supplies the element, which, in normal conditions, the "islands" of the pancreas exude.

For this reason, insulin must be taken two or three times a day throughout the life of the diabetic. Insulin, therefore, unless it is to be merely a panacea for the wealthy, must be produced at a cost, which will bring it within the reach even of the poorest.

That stage has not yet been arrived at, but Professor Brailsford Robertson seems to be approaching very closely to it. He is, however, seriously hampered by the price he has to pay for pure alcohol, which is largely employed in the manufacture of insulin.

During the year, the Adelaide University is permitted the use, for scientific purposes, of 50 gallons of absolute alcohol, duty free. That quantity was exhausted some months ago and the supplies now, have to be secured at a cost of £4 3/4 a gallon, as against 11/ under the duty free system. The substantial effect which this difference has upon the cost of production and the extent of the experimenting can be easily understood.

It can be readily calculated that, if, under existing conditions, the cost has been reduced to 9d. a dose, with a full supply of duty free alcohol, it could be brought down to 1d. a dose, which would make insulin available universally.

Common sense suggests that it should only be a matter of asking the Commonwealth Government to secure the abolition of the 50 gallons duty free limitation, which is seriously retarding scientific progress in this State, and leave the quantity unrestricted. Surely the Commonwealth Serum Laboratory is not entitled to any greater encouragement or assistance than a similar institution in any of the States.

Every possible aid should be readily rendered to research work, especially in the arenas of medicine and chemistry, upon which the happiness and well-being of mankind are so largely dependent. This particular case has behind it the added forcefulness of the cry of the suffering poor. Already it is, unfortunately, though perhaps inevitably true, that in cases of sickness the resources of medical science are more extensively available to the wealthy than the poor, but wherever the anomaly can be allayed or removed, the opportunity should not be lost.

Such excellent work has been accomplished by Professor Brailsford Robertson and his school, at the University, that every help and facility needed for their good work should be ungrudgingly supplied. In no circumstances should the expenditure of a few beggarly pounds be permitted to obstruct the application of life-saving and health-giving preparation to the afflicted poor.

Advertiser 5.12.23

OIL IN NEW GUINEA.

GOVERNMENT OF THE ISLAND.

It has been affirmed of late that there are no oil deposits in New Guinea, but this was not confirmed by Mr. E. R. Stanley, who at the Prince of Wales lecture-room, at the University, on Tuesday evening showed lantern slides of a blow-hole on the surface of which oil was floating, with bubbles of gas breaking through. Further, he stated that seepages occurred in certain places with oil running away at the rate of a gallon a minute. A bore had been put down 2,000 feet through rocks bearing oil, and in the next 500 ft. there were hopes that flowing oil would be struck in payable quantities. Mr. Stanley was lecturing on "The discovery and development of New Guinea." Professor Brailsford Robertson presided.

Guinea, said the lecturer, was discovered first in 1511 by the Portuguese. Fifteen years later a Portuguese mariner, Don George Meneses, was blown out of his course during the monsoonal season, and landed on New Guinea. His Malay crew called the natives papuas, or "the hairy-headed," from which was derived the name Papua. In 1545 the Spanish navigator, De Relles, saw the island, and was so struck with its likeness to the Guinea coast that he called it Nueva Guinea, or New Guinea.

In dealing with the native races, mixed as they were, in New Guinea, it was a difficult matter to know how to work in their best interests. Slavery had now disappeared, but had a very near relation in indentured labor. Natives were indentured by a licensed recruiter, and if willing to work, were taken before a magistrate and indentures for one, two, or three years were signed. The "boys" made good miners, and could work hard on an open face, but on the average their working capacity was one-third that of a white man. Regarding administration, there were two methods—one, the direct, as used by the French, which meant abolishing native customs and introducing European institutions in their place; and the indirect, which was the method used by the British, by which such customs as were useful were retained and taken advantage of as instruments of good government. The policy of pacificism had worked well in Papua, and cannibals and headhunters were unknown except in the remote regions. The Papuans were of a nomadic habit for the most part, dwarfish in stature, rarely exceeding 4 ft. 8 in. in height.

Lantern slides were shown illustrating gold mining, osmiridium working, and boring for oil. The agricultural resources were shown by photographs of cocoanut plantations, of rubber trees, cocoa, coffee, and cotton. The fertility of the soil was illustrated by the dense jungles, with huge trees. Particularly interesting were pictures of the native police.

EDUCATION/ ETHIC DS.

Fascinating and Instructive Tour.

Return of Mr. W. T. McCoy.

Register 5.12.23

The Director of Education (Mr. W. T. McCoy) returned to Adelaide on Tuesday after having spent over seven months in a tour of the world, in the course of which he gained much valuable information concerning educational methods in many countries. As a member of the Imperial Education Conference he met the leading men in the Education Departments of most of the dominions and colonies.

The main purpose of the visit of the head of the Education Department of South Australia to England was to attend the Imperial Education Conference; but, in addition to that, he was given a commission by the Governor to investigate the systems of education in other lands. He left Adelaide on March 5, and since then he has visited England, many countries on the Continent of Europe the United States of America, and Canada. He returned to Adelaide via the Pacific route, and, on reaching Adelaide on Tuesday morning, by train from Melbourne, he was met by the Minister of Education (Hon. T. Pascoe) and a very large number of officials of the department and friends. Throughout the trip he was accompanied by Mrs. McCoy. In the afternoon the director granted an interview to a representative of The Register, and, in addition to the story he had to tell of the work he had accomplished, he had numerous anecdotes about the manner in which he spent some of the few hours devoted to pleasure. These told of trips to Wembley, to see the famous finals of the football when the crowd of hundreds of thousands of people broke through the



MR. W. T. MCCOY, Director of Education, who returned to Adelaide yesterday from a world tour.

enclosure; to the stadium at New York where the final of the baseball games was being contested in the presence of 70,000 people; to Germany, for one day, when he spent scores of millions of marks, representing 12/6 of English money; to Scotland, Denmark, and Sweden, and to many places of great interest in America. As he said, "Altogether, we had a most pleasant and profitable trip."

The Conference. Speaking of the Imperial Education Conference, Mr. McCoy said he had already sent to the Minister a preliminary report. The conference had lasted for three weeks, and was attended by 44 representatives from 37 different parts of the British Empire. The representatives from Australia and New Zealand were Mr. Frank Tate, I.S.O., C.M.G., Director of Education of Victoria, and himself. They had taken their full share in the business, and Mr. Tate could fairly be dubbed the leader of the conference. Speaking of the results, he said that probably the most important direct one was the obtaining of a more complete knowledge of the work of administration of education departments

gained through direct contact with those controlling education in various parts of the Empire. Many of the problems of Canada and South Africa, for instance, rural schools, and the teaching of agriculture, were similar to those Australia had to face, and it was most interesting to listen to the accounts of the successes and failures related by the representatives of those dominions. "I might mention, incidentally," he added, "that I visited subsequently two of the provinces of Canada—Ontario and Manitoba—and gained first-hand information concerning those particular topics. This will be presented to the Minister in the form of a special report." Resuming reference to the conference, the Director said that the different conditions of life in the various countries, and the diversity of peoples to be served, made it impossible, even if it were desirable, to frame a system of education that would serve all parts of the Empire; but a comparison of the systems and the methods used had provided him with a mass of information and experience which should prove helpful in arriving at a solution of the educational problems of South Australia. The most interesting debates at the conference were upon such subjects as "The provision of rural schools in sparsely settled parts," "Agricultural education," "Forms of technical education," "Scope of the school medical service," "Classification and training of backward and mentally deficient children," and "The use of the cinema in education."

Collecting Information. "During my absence," said Mr. McCoy, "I visited schools in London and Manchester, in the provinces of Kent, Somerset, and Devon, in Wales, and in Scotland. In company with Mr. Tate, I investigated the work in the Swiss, Danish, and Swedish schools, and subsequently travelled to Canada, where, through the courtesy of the Premier of Ontario (Hon. Howard Ferguson), and the Director-General of Education (Dr. Merchant), I was able to get a good knowledge of the system in that most progressive province. At the special request of His Excellency the Governor (Sir Tom Bridges), I made enquiries into the work of the boys and girls agricultural clubs in Ontario and Manitoba. During the voyage home I disentangled the mass of notes made during my trip, and, with the able assistance of Mrs. McCoy, wrote them up in the form of a report, which is to be presented to His Excellency. I should like it to be known that Sir Archibald Weigall, our late Governor, took a very keen interest in all my enquiries, and did more than any one else to help me in my investigations concerning agricultural education in Great Britain. Lord Novar, our late Governor-General, and now Secretary for Scotland in the Imperial Government, was also much interested, and sent for me for the explicit purpose of placing the resources of his department at my disposal, and putting me in touch with his officers controlling education in Scotland. I should also like to mention the great courtesy and assistance given to me by the Agent-General (Sir Edward Lucas), the secretary (Mr. J. B. Whiting) and Mr. E. H. Peake. Indeed, had it not been for the assistance of those gentlemen in the Agent-General's office, especially when I was engaged in selecting teachers, much of the work I set out to do could not have been accomplished. In connection with the appointment of teachers, I may say that there were 180 applications for the 70 positions. This was from those who fulfilled the qualification that they should be trained teachers who had never taught, but, in addition, there were 300 requests from trained teachers, of from five to 50 years' experience, who were very anxious to get out to Australia."

Intense Loyalty. "The deepest impression gained by me during the trip," continued Mr. McCoy, "was the wonderful loyalty of the public of Great Britain towards the King and Queen. I saw the magnificent reception they were given in the streets of London when the Duke of York was married, the cheering crowds in Edinburgh to 'see the King go by,' and the enthusiastic cheering of the 200,000 football spectators at Wembley at the final of the great football matches."

Comparison with Australian Systems. Referring to educational systems in other lands as compared with our own, the Director said, "I do not care to make comparisons, for the conditions are so utterly different in the various countries. In a few respects, we in Australia are in line with, or perhaps a little ahead of, other countries, for example, in the provision we make, especially in South Australia, for the education of children in the backblocks. We are behind them, however, in many other respects, and we have a great deal yet to learn. In the course of my investigations, however, I met with no more loyal, hard-working, or deserving body of public servants than the teachers of South Australia. If the Minister determines to put any new schemes into operation, I am quite sure they will not fail through any lack of zeal or enthusiasm on the part of the teachers. I cannot say whether there will be any changes in the general policy of the de-