

# UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE.

## Students and "Rags."

### Dominion Science Scholarships.

The conference of representatives of Australian Universities was concluded at the Adelaide University on Friday. As the result of a decision made, students in the future will be under the jurisdiction of the University whether they are in the precincts of the institution or not. That will mean that the University will have jurisdiction over student "rags."

The Imperial College of Science, Edinburgh, in order to encourage the attendance of research students from the dominions, this year granted the sum of £3,000 for 10 scholarships of £300 each to graduates of the dominion universities. Two of those scholarships came to Australia. A representative of the college was in Australia this year, and he then intimated that the grant was for only one year. It was most desirable, he said, that the system of scholarships should be continued, and requested that the universities in Australia should raise money to see that that was done. The matter was considered at the University Conference, and it was considered that the best plan, before making a move in the matter of finance, would be to find out definitely from the college of the facilities to be granted to the students in the future.

#### Supervision of Students.

Arising out of the recent "rags" of University students the matter of jurisdiction of the universities over students was raised by Tasmanian delegates. The conference expressed the opinion that the universities had a jurisdiction over their students outside of the University, as well as within the precincts of the institution. That was so either by statute or consent. This means that in any future "rags" the students, if they transgress the laws of the University to which they belong may expect that institution to act.

#### Music and Arts Course.

The conference resolved that it was desirable to include music as a subject in the course for the arts degree. The matter was brought under the notice of the congress by the Adelaide University. They proposed that the first year of the Mus. Bac. course should be recorded as the equivalent of two units in the arts course, which consists of 12 years.

#### Mental Decision.

The Western Australian delegates raised the question of the place of mental decision in University examinations. The conference thought that the position of mental decision was not yet at the stage at which it would be of any advantageous use in University examinations.

#### Universities and Customs.

A number of the universities are having difficulty with the Customs Department in respect to the importation of scientific material. The regulations of the department provide that goods from countries such as America can come into Australia free of duty provided that it can be certified they cannot be manufactured in Australia or Great Britain. The Melbourne University has had no difficulty in this matter. There a declaration has been accepted by the Customs Department without question and the instruments admitted. Other universities, however, have not met with that good fortune, and have had to pay duty on instruments described in the declaration mentioned. The conference arranged a further deputation to wait upon the Minister for Customs in Melbourne the week after next on the matter to try to come to some better arrangement.

#### Canberra University.

In reference to the provision of an examining university at Canberra, which was discussed by the conference on Thursday, and adjourned until Friday pending the receipt of special information from the Sydney University, the latter was received from Professor MacCallum, and was considered by the members. They resolved, after discussion, that while they recognised the arguments of Professor MacCallum, they were opposed to the suggestion of a university for granting degrees by examination, since it tended to make permanent an imperfect system, which was only adopted at present in Australia in the case of special local conditions requiring it, and any extension of which should be strictly limited.

#### The Ph.D. Degree.

In the matter of the Doctor of Philosophy degree a very interesting outline of the practice of this degree in America was given by Professor Brailford Robertson at the invitation of the conference. After hearing him the conference resolved

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Western Australia raised the question of mental tests for university examinations. The conference thought that the position of mental tests had not yet reached such a stage as to be of any definite use in university examinations.

#### Duty on Scientific Material.

It was reported that a number of universities had experienced difficulty with the Customs authorities in regard to the importation of scientific material. The regulations provided that goods from America might come in free on condition that it was certified that goods of equivalent quality could not be manufactured in Australia or the United Kingdom. Some universities had no difficulty. A declaration signed by the head of a department was accepted without question. Certain other universities, however, had to pay duty. It was decided by the conference that a deputation should wait on the Minister of Customs and place the matter before him.

The case for the establishment of a university at Canberra put by Professor MacCallum, acting warden of the Sydney University, was further considered. It was decided that although it recognised the force of many of Professor MacCallum's arguments conference opposed the suggested university for granting degrees by examination since it would tend to make permanent an imperfect system only adopted at present in Australia in cases where special local conditions required it, and any extension of which should be strictly limited.

An interesting outline of the practice and experience of the Ph.D. degree in America was given by Professor Brailford Robertson. The conference resolved that, in view of the resolution of the 1922 Conference, that it was desirable that Australian universities should, as far as possible, adopt a uniform system of degrees in arts, science, and professional faculties, and also adopt, as far as possible, similar nomenclature; it was desirable that steps be taken to encourage students to pursue post-graduate work in the Australian universities; (2) that to that end the several universities be asked to report on the proposal to institute the Ph.D. degree, and to consider the scheme submitted by the Professorial Board at the University of Melbourne.

#### Forestry

The question of a school of forestry in Australia was brought up by Professor Mitchell, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Adelaide. It was resolved that for the development of forestry a school for professional training be established for the whole of Australia, and that this could best be done by completing the school now in existence in the University of Adelaide. It was further resolved that the Federal Government be requested to give effect to this recommendation.

A discussion took place on leave for members of teaching staffs of universities. It was resolved that facilities for periodical leave of absence should be given to all members of university teaching staffs if financial resources permitted.

The proposed course of general science in public examinations was discussed. The following resolution was carried:—"This conference recommends the addition to the syllabus for public examinations—public, junior, or intermediate standard—of a course in general science, as an alternative to a course in specialised science."

The secretary reported that the Federal Government had decided to reserve a band of wireless waves for educational institutions. It was resolved that, in addition to this band, which would be used for broadcasting purposes, a short band in the middle series of about 200 or 300 metres, also one from high and one from low frequency be reserved for investigation purposes by university authorities.

The conference reaffirmed the principle that within the requirements of matriculation, adequate education in English, mathematics, and a language other than English, was required, and pointed out that reciprocal arrangements existed for common recognition of matriculation.

At the conclusion of the conference, Sir John MacFarland, Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, moved a vote of thanks to Sir George Murray, Chancellor of the Adelaide University, for his valuable work as chairman.

In the evening the delegates were entertained at luncheon at the Grand Central Hotel by Sir George Murray.

that in view of the resolution of the 1922 conference, which considered it desirable that the Australian universities should as far as possible adopt a uniform system of degrees in arts, science, and the professional faculties, and also as far as possible adopt a similar nomenclature, it was desirable:—1. That steps be taken to encourage the study of post-graduate work in the Australian universities. 2. To that end several universities be asked to report on the proposal of instituting a Ph.D. degree, and to consider the scheme submitted by the professorial staff of the Melbourne University.

#### Forestry School.

The necessity for a school of forestry was brought before the conference by Professor Mitchell (Adelaide). It was resolved by the conference that it was essential for the development of Forestry that a school for provisional training should be established for the whole of Australia, that it was considered this should be done by completing the school now existing in the University of Adelaide, and that the Federal Government should be requested to give effect to this recommendation.

#### Leave for Lecturers.

It was the opinion of the conference that leave of absence facilities should be given to all members of the university teaching staffs if the financial resources permitted.

#### Science and Examinations.

The conference recommended the addition to the syllabus of public examinations up to the junior or intermediate standard of a course in general science as an alternative to a course in specialized science.

#### Universities and Wireless.

The secretary (Mr. Addison) reported to the conference that the Federal Government had been approached, and had decided to set aside a band of waves—in connection with wireless telegraphy—for educational purposes. The length of the waves had not yet been decided. The conference decided that in addition to the band already reserved, which would be used for broadcasting purposes, a short band in the middle series of about 200 or 300 metres should be reserved, and also a very high and a very low length be reserved for the purpose of investigation by the university laboratories.

#### Matriculation.

The conference reaffirmed the principle that, in the requirements for matriculation, adequate attention in English, mathematics, and a language other than English, was required, and pointed out that reciprocal arrangements existed between the universities for common recognition of matriculation.

#### Conference Concluded.

The conference ended at 5 o'clock. Sir John MacFarland (Chancellor of the Melbourne University) secured the passing of a vote of thanks to Sir George Murray (Chancellor of the Adelaide University) for the manner in which he had presided.

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# ORGANIZED PLAY.

## Growth of the System.

### Sir James Barrett at Rotary Club.

At the weekly meeting of the Rotary Club, held in Balfour's Cafe on Friday, Sir James Barrett (of the Melbourne University and a delegate at the Science Conference) delivered an instructive address on the establishment of organized playgrounds, and urged that private bodies should provide more of such grounds and that their supervision should be undertaken by properly trained leaders appointed by public bodies.

The President (Mr. D. Eardley McLaren) expressed regret that one of their members, Mr. C. A. Bayer (Hydraulic Engineer) was absent on account of a severe illness. He had pleasure in welcoming Dr. A. E. V. Richardson, of Melbourne (a fellow rotarian). The chairmanship of the meeting was handed over to Dr. R. H. Palleine, who in introducing Sir James Barrett, said he felt like a powdermonkey introducing his admiral. Sir James would need no introduction in Sydney or Melbourne, where he was known as an intense humanitarian. He was one of the first to go to the front, and one of the last to come back. He was never content unless he was getting things done, and his motto was "Do it now."

**Initiating the New Idea.**  
Sir James Barrett, in rising, thanked the members for their hearty reception, and said he knew what he was about to submit would be interesting to them. The world was changing, and in the near future play would take an important part in State affairs. Habit and social customs were changing, and consequently educational requirements were also changing. Time was when the child's education and play were conducted in the home, because there was sufficient room there; but a stage had now been reached when the education of the child was taken out of the hands of the parents by an organized education system, and in the huge cities the child's play was also taken away from the home by a similar system. The first people to learn the value of organized play were the Americans. In all the great cities of America a new factor had entered into business. As those cities grew it became patent to the Americans that undesirable things were happening. In the huge and growing industrial cities they were breeding a type they did not appreciate. They saw that it was impossible to knock down a city and rebuild it because it possessed slums and an underworld. Something had to be done, and they adopted a play system that had been introduced in Germany, and with feverish energy developed a new system of their own, which was known throughout the world, as the American play system. Dr. Gulick's book, "The Philosophy of Play"—which he advised those present to read—was their text book. After leaving work it should be the desire of every one to turn to a recreation, and after school the child's thoughts immediately turned to play. Play was individual up to five years, competitive between the ages of five and seven; but after that team work came in, where the child had to play with its fellows, or not play at all. If it played in a team it had to submit to rules made by the commonwealth of children, and the child had to recognise immediately that self government was essential.

**Art of Self Government.**  
Gulick's view was that self government was learnt as an art during play, rather than taught as a theory, and the earlier people learnt to govern themselves, the earlier they would be successful. The sins of the underworld and the villainous of the "pushes" in their brutal assaults owed their beginning to some cause. It was not necessary to punish them. The world should enquire why those people behaved in that way. There was preventive medicine in social life as well as in medical life. Gulick set down what the child did, and why he did it. In man from premeval times there was the instinct of self-defence, and there was also a powerful instinct of play during which time they practised the methods of self-defence. The play of the child should, therefore, be harnessed to desirable ends. To do this the playground system was begun in Boston in 1886, and it took 13 years to establish one playground. In 1900 12,000,000 people in America were spending £12,000 in play, and to-day 20,000,000 were spending £3,000,000 a year in playgrounds, with properly trained leaders and assistants. The grounds were divided into sections for each of the different ages, and dance halls were established, because it was thought better for the people to dance under proper control than to dance in the saloons around the corner. In New York three acres of land was purchased for £36,000, for the purpose of establishing a playground. This area was previously occupied by hovels, and was a breeding place of vice. The authorities thought it was better to spend that money in establishing a playground than to do so in catching the criminals that the area produced. The Australian cities had been allowed to sprawl themselves over the land without any provision for future play areas—he referred particularly to Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane.

**Play Leaders Essential.**  
The authorities in those cities had now to buy ground at a very heavy cost. When cities were being laid out definite areas should be set apart for definite purposes, and this was being done to some extent in the townplanning schemes. The preparation for leisure had to be considered, just as carefully as the preparation for education, because it was during leisure that character was largely formed. What was done in leisure determined what outlook a person took in life. Children should have the opportunity of developing mentally, morally, and physically, with free exercise of play. The professional play leader and play director were essential to the community. Without a proper directing authority a play area would soon become a bear garden, and the bad elements of society loosened. Team work in play was making a better class of men in business. The play system was introduced by the Americans into the British troops during the war, and the Egyptians were now adopting it in the Soudan. In Melbourne and Sydney the play leader system was recognised, and was being put into operation, but the municipal authorities were offering the leader about one-third of the pay of the municipal rat catcher. A proper remuneration should be paid the trained play leader. It was not right to throw the burden of paying his salary on a voluntary body, but the continuous authorities should look after that. The