

### INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTE.

THE International statistical institute held its first meeting at Rome from April 12 to April 17. Among the distinguished scientists present were Sir Rawson W. Rawson of England, president of the institute; Signor Bodio, director-general of statistics in Italy; Professor Neumann-Spallart of Vienna; Professor Levasseur of Paris; Professor Wagner of Berlin; Dr. Engel, formerly director of the Prussian statistical bureau; Dr. Broch of Norway; and M. Léon Say of Paris. It was resolved that the working members of the institute should be limited to a hundred and fifty, and they are to be chosen exclusively from those who make a special study of statistics, and take a real interest in them.

One of the most important papers presented was that of Dr. Engel, on "Consumption as the measure of the prosperity of individuals, families, and nations." The paper is described as elaborate and ingenious, and gave a valuation of the minimum cost of maintenance from birth to the age of twenty-five. Dr. Engel calculates that an infant cannot be nourished from birth to the end of the first year at a less cost than five pounds, and that by the age of twenty-five each individual has cost, in the way of maintenance, not less than nearly three hundred pounds.

He also gave a statement of the estimated share of the earnings of a family, contributed by each member of it. The estimate is based on the cost of maintenance of a family consisting of a father and mother, and six children under eleven years of age. Taking the total as 16.1, Dr. Engel's figures, representing the consumption of the different members, are these:—

The father.....	3.5
The mother.....	3.0
One child eleven years old.....	2.1
One nine years old.....	1.9
One seven years old.....	1.7
One five years old.....	1.5
One three years old.....	1.3
One a year old.....	1.1
Total.....	16.1

Dr. Kekti of Hungary had a paper which confirmed Dr. Engel's conclusions, though it was written from a different point of view. Professor Ferraris of Italy read a paper on the movement of the precious metals between Italy and other countries, — a subject of peculiar interest to his countrymen, in view of their recent successful return to specie payments. Mr. Robert Giffen argued in favor of establishing a common measure of prices in different countries. Mr. Bateman, of the English board of trade, touched another important

point when he presented the question of how to establish a better basis than now exists for the comparison of the trade statistics of various countries.

### THE MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC AND HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS.

THE fourth annual meeting of the American historical association, and the second annual meeting of the American economic association, opened at eight o'clock on Saturday evening, May 21, in Huntington hall, of the Institute of technology, Boston. Among the members of the associations present were Francis A. Walker, Justin Winsor, Alfred Emerton, Dr. F. W. Taussig, Prof. C. F. Dunbar, and Prof. W. W. Goodwin, of Harvard; Prof. A. T. Hadley of Yale; Profs. R. M. Smith, F. J. Goodnow, E. M. Smith, N. M. Butler, and E. R. A. Seligman, of Columbia; Prof. Alexander Johnston of Princeton; H. C. Adams and ex-President A. D. White of Cornell; Profs. E. J. James and C. J. Stillé of Philadelphia; Profs. H. B. Adams and R. T. Ely of Baltimore; Dr. Philip Schaff, Judge C. A. Peabody, Hon. John Jay, and General Cullum, of New York City.

President Walker's opening address was a brief analysis of the present industrial status. He followed the development of thought with reference to the manual-laboring class, and pointed out the sources of our present industrial troubles. He was most outspoken in condemnation of the boycott and of the methods of the demagogues among the Knights of labor. His appeal for a re-assertion of the spirit of American men and American institutions as against the methods of our immigrant population was forcibly stated, and was greeted with enthusiastic expressions of approval.

President Winsor of the Historical society followed with a scholarly address on the 'Documentary sources of American history.' He told what had been done by Jared Sparks, Peter Force, and George Bancroft for the collection and publication of state documents. He instanced the history of the Trumbull papers as evidence of what vicissitudes important documents might be called upon to pass through. He closed with the practical suggestion, that, before it is too late, the U. S. government should establish some body, like the Historical manuscripts commission of England, charged with the task of collating and preserving papers of value for the history of the development of the political life and thought of the country.

After the addresses a reception was tendered the members of both associations by the trustees of the Museum of fine arts, in that building.

On Monday, the 23d, both associations settled down to work. At the morning session of the Historical association a most valuable paper was presented by Judge Mellen Chamberlain of Boston, on "The constitutional relations of the American colonies to the English government at the commencement of the American revolution." Judge Chamberlain's argument was purely legal, and called forth from Professor Johnston of Princeton a few remarks on the relation of the legal to the political argument in considerations of this sort. The other papers of this session were 'Historical grouping,' by James Schouler; 'Diplomatic prelude to the seven-years' war,' by H. E. Mills; and 'Silas Deane,' by Charles Isham.

The corresponding session of the Economic association was devoted to the transportation problem, and developed many points of interest. The standing committee on transportation presented a report which indicated the plan of the work to be undertaken. Professor James of Philadelphia gave an historical *résumé* of the agitation for national regulation of the railways in the United States, and a notice of the Windom report of 1873, and the Cullum report of 1886. The interstate commerce bill he regarded as tentative, but as a step in the right direction.

Dr. Seligman of Columbia followed with the most valuable paper of the session, on the 'Long and short haul clauses of the federal railway law.' Dr. Seligman entered minutely into the subject of railway charges, and explained carefully and clearly the phrase 'what the traffic will bear.' After showing the difference between differential and preferential rates, the speaker defended the former on grounds of public policy, while heartily condemning the latter. Dr. Seligman was very emphatic in his assertion, and very clear in his proof, that the charge for railway service should be based, not on its cost, but on its value. From this principle follow classification and discrimination. Dr. Seligman concluded, "Under a system of free competition among private railways, the principle of volume of service, or charging what the traffic will bear, is the only rational method calculated to give the most efficient service and greatest profits. But the existence or possibility of the abuse of power requires the restriction of this unlimited liberty in the public interest. The reconciliation of the railways and public interest can take place only through the interposition of public authority. The public authority must lay down the rule of equal treatment as the fundamental doctrine, but must recognize the principle of value as a reason for departing from the doctrine in individual cases. Omission of either duty necessarily entails injustice or inefficiency." Si-

mon Sterne, Esq., followed with a paper on European railroads, and an animated discussion ensued, participated in by Professor Hadley of Yale, Simon Sterne, and Edward Atkinson of Boston.

In the afternoon both associations were entertained at Wellesley college by the faculty and students of that institution. At the evening session of the Economic association, Mr. Franklin H. Giddings, editor of *Work and wages*, offered a philosophical paper on the 'Sociological character of political economy.' Hon. John Jay read before the Historical association an essay on the 'Peace negotiations of 1783,' Dr. H. B. Adams gave an interesting account of Ranke's personality and work, and Dr. Francke of Harvard discussed the 'Parliamentary experiment in Germany.'

#### HEALTH MATTERS.

MOUNTAIN-CLIMBING. — Dr. L. Barkan of Brooklyn has contributed an article to the *New York medical journal* on the advantages of mountain-climbing. He regards the pure mountain air as one of the best of disinfecting agents. He says there are floating in the air numberless germs, many of them of a harmful nature; and it would seem possible that the injurious germs which, especially in large places, are received into the human organism, might be rendered innocuous by the oxygen of the air, and perhaps also by air-currents acting in a mechanical way, while in stagnant air — as, for example, in a badly ventilated apartment, where the exhalations from the lungs and skin are constantly accumulating — there is less disinfectant action because of the diminished quantity of oxygen. The best inhalation apparatus, baths, and medicaments, are of but temporary value, if no compensation is made for the loss of vitality and of muscular tone, especially that of the heart and vessels; if the blood stasis in the glands and other organs does not yield to an increased flow of blood in the arteries and veins; if the thinned blood does not become thicker and more rich in albumen; if the accumulating carbonic acid is not expelled by a more plentiful supply of oxygen; if the fat deposited in the body is not more rapidly oxidized; and if the kidneys are not made to act more efficiently. All these effects are produced, according to Jacobi, Loomis, Veit, Oertel, and other authorities, more certainly and more generally by mountain-climbing than in any other way whatever. After several weeks spent in mountain excursions, the condition of the patient is radically changed for the better. There is an elasticity of the mental processes in place of the former hebetude; will, thought, and impulse seem to move on wings; the