

*THE PROPOSED NATIONAL UNIVERSITY.*

THE committee appointed by the National Educational Association to consider the advisability of establishing a national university met in Washington on November 3d, and unanimously agreed upon a preliminary report recommending that no new university be established, but indicating the advisability of using the collections and resources of the government for advanced work and the establishment by the government of a school for consuls. The report of the committee is as follows:

(1) It has been, and is, one of the recognized functions of the federal government to encourage and aid, but not to control, the educational instrumentalities of the country.

(2) No one of the bills heretofore brought before Congress to provide for the incorporation of a national university in Washington commends itself to this committee as a practical measure.

(3) The government is not called upon to maintain at the capital a university in the ordinary sense of that term.

(4) That a sub-committee be requested to prepare for consideration by the full committee a detailed plan by which students, who have taken a baccalaureate degree, or who have had an equivalent training, may take full and systematic advantage of the opportunities for advanced instruction and research which are now, or may hereafter be, afforded by the government; such a plan to include the coöperation with the Smithsonian Institution of the universities willing to accept a share of the responsibility incident thereto. It is understood that the financial administration of this plan should be such that whether or not government aid be given, there shall be no discouragement of private gifts or bequests. It is understood that the scope of this plan should be indicated by the governmental collections and establishments which are now available, or as they may hereafter be increased or developed by the government for its own purposes.

(5) The government, through the State Department, might wisely maintain in Washington a school for consuls, analogous to West Point and Annapolis, and make these schools lead to a life career in the government service.

*RESOLUTIONS OF THE SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL GEOGRAPHICAL CONGRESS.\**

(1) THE Congress appoints a Committee of Bio-geographers resident in or near Berlin to draw up a uniform scheme of nomenclature for plant formations, and after consultation with non-resident specialists, to revise the same and present it to the Eighth Congress.

(2) The Congress believes that the plans for international coöperation in Antarctic exploration form an excellent basis for joint research in physical geography, geology, geodesy and biology. With regard to meteorological and magnetic work, however, they appoint an international committee to determine the general scheme and methods to be employed on the expeditions, and to endeavor to organize a system of simultaneous observations in the regions surrounding, but exterior to, the Antarctic.

(3) The Congress expresses the earnest desire that all maps, including those published in countries using English and Russian measures, should, in addition to the graphic scale, bear the proportion of lengths on the map to those in nature in the usual form 1 :  $x$ .

(4) The Congress views it as desirable that the publication of all new geographical material accompanying accounts of travel, should be supported by details regarding the methods of surveying, the instruments employed, and their verification, the calculation of astronomical positions with their probable error, and the method of utilizing these data in preparing the map. Also that all maps published by scientific men, institutions or governments should be accompanied by notes of the principal fixed points.

(5) The Congress expresses the hope that a uniform system of measures will be used in all geographical researches and discussions, and recommends that the metric system of weights and measures be so employed.

(6) The Congress expresses the hope that in scientific publications the centigrade thermometer scale should, as far as possible, be employed; or, at least, the values in centigrade degrees added to those expressed on the scales of Fahrenheit or Réaumur.

(7) With regard to the proposal to introduce

\* From *Nature*.

a decimal division of time and angles, the Congress desires to preserve the present division of time and of the circumference into  $360^\circ$ , but allows that the adoption of a different subdivision of the angle might be studied, and considers that in certain cases the decimal subdivision of the degree of arc presents no objection.

(8) The Congress is of opinion that the *Bibliotheca Geographica*, published by the Berlin Geographical Society, may be accepted as an efficient international bibliography of geography.

(9) The Congress considers the construction of statistical population maps to be very desirable, and appoints an international committee to draw up a scheme, at the same time expressing the hope that national committees will be formed in various countries to promote the preparation of such maps.

(10) The Congress considers the collection of data as to the distribution of floating ice to be very important, and appeals to the hydrographic and meteorological institutes of the countries whose ships frequent high latitudes to induce the masters of vessels to keep a regular record of the occurrence of drifting ice. The Congress believes that the Danish Meteorological Institute in Copenhagen is the best adapted as an international centre for collecting the records.

(11) The Congress nominates an international committee to consider the nomenclature of the floor of the ocean, and to produce and publish at latest in time for the next Congress a chart of the ocean with revised nomenclature.

(12) The Congress hopes that the names of oceanic islands, especially in the Pacific, will be revised with a view to ascertaining and preserving the native names. Where no native names exist or can be ascertained, the names given by the discoverers should be used. The arbitrary changing of established names ought to be opposed by every means.

(13) The Congress recognizes the desirability of obtaining data for a more exact estimate than now exists of countries in which there is no means of taking a census, and desires to bring the matter to the notice of such Governments as have foreign possessions.

(14) The Congress expresses sympathy with the proposal to equip an expedition in New South Wales, with the sole object of endeavoring to discover remains or traces of the route of the Leichhardt expedition, which perished in the interior of Australia fifty-two years ago.

(15) The Congress is favorable to the foundation of an international seismological society, and appoints an international committee for the study of earthquakes.

(16) The Congress believes the production of a map of the world on the scale of 1:1,000,000, the sheets bounded by meridians and parallels, to be both useful and desirable. The Permanent Bureau of the Congress is instructed to deal with the question, and in the first instance to secure the preparation of a projection for the map with degree lines on the determined scale.

(17) The Congress considers the establishment of an International Cartographical Association of service, and appoints a committee to take preliminary steps.

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#### SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

THE family of the late Dr. Daniel Garrison Brinton have requested Mr. Stewart Culin, of the University of Pennsylvania, to prepare a memoir of the distinguished Americanist. Mr. Culin is desirous of obtaining copies of Dr. Brinton's letters and other literary materials, which may be sent him at the University of Pennsylvania.

PROFESSOR SIMON NEWCOMB has returned to Washington from Europe. His last official services while abroad were to represent, together with Professors Remsen and Bowditch, the National Academy of Sciences at a conference held at Wiesbaden, on October 10th and 11th, to form an International Association of Academies.

SIR WILLIAM MACCORMAC, president of the Royal College of Surgeons, and one of the greatest authorities on gunshot wounds, has volunteered his services in South Africa, and the British War Office has accepted his offer.

MR. ALEX EVERETT FRYE, the geographer, has been appointed superintendent of schools for Cuba.

THE daily newspapers report that Professors Lengfeld and Smith and four students have