

The idea of bringing together competent persons to discuss the subject of home (or family) education in its various bearings, and to formulate methods for promoting the physical, intellectual and moral well-being of children, originated in Belgium, and the First International Congress with this object in view met at Liège in 1905.

Interest in the movement, meanwhile, became wide-spread among educational authorities in the different states of Europe, while its importance as a possible means of diminishing criminal tendencies and so preventing crime and other anti-social evils was recognized by the various governments. This growing interest was manifested in the Second International Congress, convened at Milan in 1906 under the patronage of the Italian government.

The Third Congress, which is now announced, will extend and define the work already so auspiciously begun. The character and scope of the movement in its present stage of development will be, perhaps, best understood by referring to the program issued by the organizing committee of the congress, which has been prepared in the light of the experience gained in the former meetings.

The congress will consist of five sections:

Section 1—The study of childhood.

Section 2—The education of children: (a) general questions; (b) the education of children by their parents in the home; (c) cooperation of the family with the school; (d) education in the home after school.

Section 3—Abnormal children.

Section 4—Various subjects relating to childhood.

Section 5—Documentation.

An American committee has been appointed at the request of the Belgian government by Hon. E. E. Brown, United States Commissioner of Education, to stimulate interest in the work of the congress. This committee has organized a number of subcommittees, each representing one of the sections of the congress. An effort will be made to secure a large American representation in the sessions at Brussels.

Membership in the congress entitles to a copy of the Proceedings. The membership fee is two dollars, and may be sent either to the general secretary, 44 rue Rubens, Brussels, or to the secretary of the American committee.

Administrations, educational bodies and philanthropic societies can take part in the congress and be represented by a delegate. A subscription must be paid for each delegate.

Those who subscribe not less than ten dollars become honorary members. Subscriptions of this type are needed to defray the general expenses of the propaganda.

Papers and discussions may be presented in any of the following languages: French, German, English, Dutch, Italian and Spanish.

Americans wishing to participate in the discussions of the congress, or to further its work by becoming members, should communicate with the secretary of the American committee, Professor W. C. Bagley, Urbana, Ill.

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#### *THE MINING EXPERIMENT STATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA*

In order to promote the development of the mining and allied manufacturing interests of the state and especially to aid the utilization of the great deposits of lignite coal and the valuable clays, a Mining Experiment Station has been created as a part of the School of Mines at the University of North Dakota and a branch Mining Experiment Sub-station established at Hebron, North Dakota.

The work of these two stations will be carried on jointly. Certain lines of investigation which require much laboratory equipment and research will be taken up at the School of Mines. When conclusions have been reached here through experimental work in the laboratory, these conclusions will at once be put to a practical working trial at the testing-out plant of the sub-station. In other words, a large part of the work of the sub-station will be for the purpose of proving in a practical way and on a commercial basis, the conclusions reached in the laboratories.

In order to provide adequate facilities for carrying on these investigations at the university, as well as to provide room for the

rapidly increasing number of students taking mining engineering work, it has been necessary to add two wings to the School of Mines building and to employ additional assistance. Certain laboratories will be set aside for the experimental and research work on gas, coal, clays, building materials, cements, etc., and for this work the laboratories will be among the very best equipped in America. This work is unquestionably of very great importance to the state.

The research which has already been carried on in the Mining Engineering College of the State University relative to lignite, coal, gas and clays has attracted the attention of many men throughout the country who are interested in these subjects. It is intended to build up laboratories and carry on investigations which will be a help to the state.

The work which will be taken up most vigorously during the coming year will be for the purpose of obtaining by investigations and practical tests, a cheap and commercially satisfactory method of lignite coal briquetting, to show the best methods of burning lignite, and to determine the possibility of utilizing lignite for producing gas for light, heat and power. Considerable attention will be given also to the utilization of the high grade clays of the state for the manufacture of a variety of wares.

In order to carry on this work on a practical commercial basis, considerable machinery of special design will be installed at the sub-station at Hebron. For several months work has been devoted to machinery and methods which seemed to be suited to the manufacture of briquettes from lignite. As a result complete briquetting plant has been designed and is now being built. The press will have a capacity of 2 tons of briquettes per hour. In addition to this a specially constructed gas plant is being made for the purpose of manufacturing gas for light, heat and power from lignite coal. This will be one of the most perfect types of gas plants and large enough to produce several thousand cubic feet per day. Machinery and kilns of commercial

working size will be installed later for practical testing of the higher grade clays.

#### THE ELIZABETH THOMPSON SCIENCE FUND

In January, 1910, there will be a meeting of the trustees of the Elizabeth Thompson Science Fund for the award of grants. Applications, in order to be considered at that time, should reach the secretary, Dr. C. S. Minot, Harvard Medical School, Boston, before January 15, 1910. All applications *must be accompanied by full information*, especially in regard to the following points:

1. Precise amount required.
2. Exact nature of the investigation proposed.
3. Conditions under which the research is to be prosecuted.
4. Manner in which the appropriation asked for is to be expended.

The trustees are disinclined, for the present, to make any grant to meet ordinary expenses of living or to purchase instruments such as are found commonly in laboratories. Decided preference will be given to applications for small amounts, and grants exceeding \$300 will be made only under very exceptional circumstances. Preference will be given to those investigations which can not otherwise be provided for.

#### THE BOSTON MEETING OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION

THE hotel headquarters for physicists at the Boston meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Physical Society will be the Hotel Brunswick, Boylston Street, near Copley Square, which is also the general association headquarters. Rates: single rooms, \$1.50 to \$2.50; double, \$2.50 to \$3.50; with bath, single, \$2.50 to \$3.50; double, \$3 to \$4.

Section B has a joint session with Section A on Tuesday afternoon, December 28, immediately after the address of Vice-president Guthe. Interesting papers will be presented by Professors G. Runge, A. A. Michelson, E. W. Brown and H. F. Reid.

Friday morning, December 31, there will be