THE BRUSSELS MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

A FEDERATION of National Research Councils met in Brussels on July 18–28. From an article in *Nature* we learn that the following countries and dominions were represented by their delegates: Belgium, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Poland, Roumania, Serbia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

On the morning of July 18, the delegates met in the Palais des Académies, where King Albert was present. M. Harmignie, the minister of science and arts, welcomed them in a short address in which he dwelt on the importance of the occasion and on the valuable results which would be obtained from international cooperation in science, and wished them success in their deliberations.

M. E. Picard, the president of the executive committee, was prevented by ill health from being present, M. A. Lacroix presided at the meetings of the general assembly. The first business was the consideration of the statutes of the International Research Council which had been provisionally agreed upon in Paris, and now came up for consideration in the final form as recommended by the executive committee.

The objects of the council are therein defined to be:

(*a*) To coordinate international efforts in the different branches of science and its applications.

(*b*) To initiate the formation of international associations or unions deemed to be useful to the progress of science.

(*c*) To direct international scientific action in subjects which do not fall within the province of any existing association.

(*d*) To enter, through the proper channels, into relations with the governments of the countries adhering to the council to recommend the study of questions falling within the competence of the council.

The countries adhering to the council are those already mentioned as represented by their delegates as well as Brazil, Australia, South Africa, Greece and Portugal—that is, those of the allied nations who were originally invited to form the International Council as possessing academies of science, and being engaged in scientific work. To these, other nations may be added at their own request or on the proposal of a country already belonging to the council, or union, by a three-fourths vote in favor of admission.

The work of the council will be directed by the general assembly, which will meet ordinarily every three years, but in the interval between its successive meetings business will be transacted by an executive committee of five members nominated by the general assembly and holding office until the next meeting of the general assembly. In the present case the executive committee, consisting of Professor E. Picard, Dr. A. Schuster, Dr. G. E. Hale, M. Volterra and M. Lecointe, has been reelected and will consider its character and constitution and report to the next meeting of the general assembly before its organization is finally laid down.

The concluding meeting of the council was held on July 28, when it was decided that all neutral nations should be invited to join the International Research Council and the International Unions created under its auspices, thus providing for the reconstitution of international scientific associations so far as is practicable at the present time.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE GALTON LABORATORY

IN a letter to the London *Times* Professor Karl Pearson calls attention to the fact that in 1908 Sir Francis Galton died and left the residue of his estate to the University of London for the maintenance of a laboratory for the study of eugenics. The objects of that laboratory were to be: (1) Research concerning all that tends mentally or physically to the improvement of the race; (2) dissemination of the knowledge thus acquired by public lectures and publications; and (3) the accumulation of material bearing on problems of racial fitness. Owing to the generosity of Sir Herbert Bartlett, a building for the housing

of the Drapers' Biometric Laboratory and the Galton Eugenics Laboratory was completed in 1914. This building contains a public lecture theater, a public museum and library, archive and instrument rooms, anthropometric laboratories and investigation rooms, besides full provision for laboratory and class teaching, with private rooms for research workers. The building was used for war purposes and money is now needed to complete its equipment. Professor Pearson writes:

The Biometric and the Galton Laboratories were the first of their kind to be established; they no longer stand alone. The United States have their professors of biometry and their eugenics laboratories backed by funds which we can not hope to rival. Why is it that Britain so often starts the new idea, but leaves it to fructify in other lands? Especially important is at the present moment the field of activity for our science. The war has brought many problems to the fore; eugenical research has much ground to make up, and most serious questions as to national efficiency are demanding scientific treatment. The Galton Laboratory is in every respect in a worse position in 1919 than it was in 1914; its staff has to undertake far heavier and more urgent work than it then dreamt of; its buildings can not be properly equipped; its publication funds, slender in 1914, can not now encompass a third of what was possible at that date, for the price of printing, binding and publication is now nearly threefold; memoirs awaiting publication. can not be issued. And, lastly, the highly-trained staff, largely absorbed into national work during the past five years, can not be reestablished on the old basis, for the old scale of payment has ceased to provide a living wage. The war has in many cases crippled institutions as well as men. Are we to see the scheme of one of the most suggestive and inspiring men of modern times and a science wholly British in its inception reduced to infruition because the university and the Galton Laboratory staff did what lay in their power to aid the national cause in a time of grave pressure?

THE POTATO DISEASE CONFERENCE

ON June twenty-fifth to twenty-eighth the advisory board of American Plant Pathologists held a Potato Disease Conference on Long Island at which nearly one hundred persons chiefly interested in plant disease attended. Meetings were held at Riverhead and Watermill, Long Island and at the Hotel McAlpin, New York City.

Three automobile excursions were taken through the island. On Wednesday, June 25, a tour was made of the north side where several most interesting field experiments were inspected. These experiments were conducted under the direction of representatives from the New York State College of Agriculture, the Suffolk County Farm Bureau, The Bureau of Plant Industry, United States Department of Agriculture, representatives from Canada and Bermuda, and the Geneva Agricultural Experiment Station.

On Thursday a trip was taken to the south side, where further experiments were inspected. During the afternoon, a meeting was held at Watermill, where addresses were made by Dr. A. D. Cotton, of the Board of Agriculture, England, who spoke on the development of plant pathology in England; by Dr. George H. Pethybridge, of the Board of Agriculture, Ireland, who gave a history of the phytopathological work in Ireland; by Dr. H. M. Quanjer, of the Pathological Laboratories, Wageningen, Holland, who gave a résumé of his researches on leaf-roll and mosaic of potato; and by Dr. H. A. Edson, of the Office of Cotton, Truck and Forage Crops Disease Investigations, Bureau of Plant Industry, who read a paper by Schultz, Folson, Hildebrandt and Hawkins on "The Mosaic Disease of the Irish Potato."

On Friday, a tour of Nassau county was enjoyed by those attending the conference. Among the places of especial interest visited on this trip were the field laboratory of the New York State College of Agriculture, at Greenlawn, the Pratt Estate, at Glen Cove and Sagamore Hill, the home of the late Colonel Roosevelt. A special visit was also made to Colonel Roosevelt's grave.

On Saturday, about forty met at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden for a conference of the North East Pathologists on general plant diseases. At this meeting they were addressed by Dr. H. M. Quznjer, who gave an illustrated