

depression set in, distress growing steadily more acute during the months of 1921. Then indeed we watched our steadily mounting average volume. Day by day, like obscene demons from the pit itself, we chalked up the rising score until it reached the appalling level of 1,550 cc. Here was a new class of men entering our portals and they came by a different route. Here were the men who could think for themselves, who knew and resented their fate. The pneumonia of the shiftless, the tuberculosis of the over-wearied struggler, the heart disease of the adventurer no longer acted alone as our receiving agents. Instead men shot themselves, or each other, threw themselves into the lake; poisoned themselves with morphine or raisin jack; perished of cold, listlessly lost in despair. All through that year and into the early months of 1922 the steady shuffle of feet on the doorstep of the Associated Charities swelled its monotonous dirge. Agitation was rife. Russia and Germany were pointed out as members of the community of nations who had passed that way before. And then, suddenly as it had begun, while yet the Charities were deluged with the throng, these expectant ghouls in anatomy saw the barometer of brain volume begin to fall, steadily, steadily down. Relief had come: though it was not apparent to the city we knew the end was in sight. Hope was restored again in those whose nervous system had been shattered by defeat. Never again have we seen the like. Slight fluctuations from year to year and an average somewhat above the pre-war mean have been our lot but never that alarming rise which we experienced in the year of intense depression.

Now these things sent us back to examine our data anew and we soon found that of two heads of the same size one might have as much as 200 cc of brain more than the other. It was not that we got larger heads in 1919 and 1921, but we got bigger brains among our social ineffectives. In normal times our pauper population is recruited from that flotsam and jetsam of humanity which idly drifts along the shores of these great lakes. "Here's Agamemnon, an honest fellow enough, and one that loves quails; but he has not so much brain as ear wax."²⁴ When, however, industrial distress overclouds the city new recruits appear, the honest industrious poor with too little margin for the rainy day, "purse and brain both empty; the brain the heavier for being too light. . . . O, the charity of a penny cord! It sums up thousands in a trice . . . your neck, sir, is pen, book and counters; so the acquittance follows."²⁵ Then there rush in, as if impatiently, the men who in indifferent times can do indifferent well, but owing to

some frailty of their intellect are crushed down by a sudden galloping destitution. "Your hearts I'll stamp out with my horse's heels, and make a quagmire of your mingled brain."²⁶

That, ladies and gentlemen, is the romance of the liter and a half. It is not the quantity but the quality that matters. It is not the quality of the whole but of the last small wine glassful. Taking mean values, 1,480 cc are needed for a fool, 1,500 cc for an honest man. And on the average a lady's cocktail saves us from inanity.

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SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

BRITISH ROYAL COMMISSION ON MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

THE *London Gazette* announces the appointment of a Royal Commission on Museums and Galleries, with wide terms of reference. The members of the commission are Lord D'Abernon (chairman), Mr. Evan Charteris, K.C., Sir Thomas Little Heath, Sir Lionel Earle, Sir Richard Tetley Glazebrook, Sir George Macdonald, Sir Courtauld Thomson, Sir Martin Conway, Sir Henry Miers, Sir Robert Witt and Dr. A. E. Cowley.

The terms of reference are as follows:

(1) To inquire into and report on the legal position, organization, administration, accommodation, the structural condition of the buildings, and general cost of the institutions containing the national collections situate in London and Edinburgh—namely, the British Museum and the Natural History Museum, the National Gallery and the National Gallery of British Art (Tate Gallery), the National Portrait Gallery, the Public Record Office, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Bethnal Green Museum, the Science Museum, the Geological Museum, the Wallace Collection, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, the London Museum, the Imperial War Museum, the Royal Scottish Museum, the National Galleries, Scotland, the Scottish Museum of Antiquities and the National Library, Scotland, the Record Department of the Registry House, Edinburgh.

(2) To investigate the existing conditions of the various collections and their growth in former years and to report in the case of each institution what is likely to be the growth of its collections and what the consequential increase in expenditure in the next fifty years if the present practice regulating acquisitions remain unaltered.

(3) To consider in what way, if any, expenditure may be limited without crippling the educational and general usefulness of the institutions, and in particular, having regard to the financial condition of the country, whether

²⁴ "Troilus and Cressida," V, 1, 58.

²⁵ "Cymbeline," V, 4, 166.

²⁶ "I King Henry VI," I, 4, 109.

it would be desirable to institute a more general system of admission fees.

(4) To inquire to what extent there is congestion in museums and galleries and to report whether, if there be such congestion, it can be relieved in any other way than by extensive building and in particular whether improvement could be brought about by a redistribution of specimens between different state-supported institutions or by disposal of specimens which may be either of slight importance or in excess of requirements, by way of sale or of gift or loan to provincial museums and galleries and to other authorities; and in this connection to ascertain the practice followed in the case of the chief national collections abroad.

(5) To consider whether it is desirable to effect any change in the existing practice of the British Museum with regard to its reception and preservation of publications under the provisions of the Copyright Acts.

(6) To consider whether the existing administrative responsibility for the various institutions is the most appropriate under modern conditions and whether it conduces to the most advantageous distribution and display of the national treasures, and to report whether it would be desirable, while preserving certain defined powers to their trustees or directors, to place them all under some central authority or under different authorities than those at present controlling them.

(7) To report whether the most suitable and scientific arrangement of specimens and their allocation to the most appropriate museum or gallery are in any way hampered by the terms of benefactors' bequests, and, if so, whether it would be expedient to take steps with a view to a modification of the terms of such bequests.

(8) To make recommendations generally which may suggest themselves as pertinent in the light of the information obtained during the course of the inquiry.

EXCURSION OF THE ELECTROCHEMISTS

THE American Electrochemical Society will board a special train at Chicago on September 4, traveling as far as Seattle and Vancouver and returning to Chicago on September 21. All the important electrolytic plants, research and university laboratories and power developments *en route* will be visited. Stops will be made at the following towns: Minneapolis, Butte, Anaconda, Wallace, Kellogg, Spokane, Seattle, Vancouver, Trail, Shelby, Great Falls and Keokuk.

America is leading the world in the production of electrolytic zinc, electrolytic lead and electrolytic copper, and ample opportunities will be offered to see the very latest production of the pure metals, starting from the mineral.

Power development in the Northwest has been progressing on a very elaborate scale, and the electrochemists are interested in new centers for the establishment of various electrolytic industries.

There will be three scientific sessions held *en route*; one at Minneapolis, another at Vancouver and a third

at Keokuk. The papers' program includes a wide diversity of subjects, ranging from the electrodeposition of rubber to thin film rectifiers.

A large number of members and guests have made reservations for the trip. The total cost, including berth and meals, starting from and returning to Chicago, is estimated at \$182. Further details are obtainable at the offices of the American Electrochemical Society, Columbia University, New York City.

THE HERMAN FRASCH FOUNDATION FOR CHEMICAL RESEARCH

By a decision of the Court of Appeals, a bequest of the residuary estate of Mrs. Elizabeth Blee Frasch, widow of Herman Frasch, for many years president of the Union Sulphur Company, which directed that the income of the gift of \$1,000,000 was to be used for chemical research in the field of agricultural chemistry, is upheld.

The will of Mrs. Frasch left her residuary estate, received largely from her husband, who was a well-known chemist, to the United States Trust Company to establish the Herman Frasch Foundation for Chemical Research. She directed that the income be paid to one or more incorporated institutions in the United States, to be selected by the trust company, after consulting with the American Chemical Society, "upon condition that the said institution shall agree that the money so received shall be devoted to research in the field of agricultural chemistry with the object of attaining results which shall be of practical benefit to the agricultural development of the United States."

Mrs. Frasch directed that the institution so selected should have the use of the funds for five years after her death, and that before the end of this period the trustee should request the American Chemical Society to examine the work done by the institutions and report "whether in its opinion satisfactory progress has been made with the funds of the foundation toward the attainment of such practical results." If the society reported that satisfactory progress had not been made, payments would cease, and another institution would be selected to make use of the income for five years, after which another inquiry would be made.

The bequest was contested on the ground that by the terms of the will the income might be used for private research which would deprive the gift of its charitable purpose. Judge Lehman in his opinion said that although Mrs. Frasch undoubtedly intended to create a trust "for purposes which would advance the public welfare," such intention "is not sufficient to give validity to a perpetual trust for the benefit of indefinite and uncertain persons" unless authorized by a law of 1893, now a section of the Personal Property Law of New York, based on the Statute of Elizabeth, which applies to a gift for religious, educational,