

A advertiser

2-3-33

CONQUEST OF CLIMATE

World Under Tribute To Science

AUSTRALIA'S LEAD

CANBERRA, March 1.

In an engrossing address here tonight, on the conquest of climate, showing how science had made vastly rich areas of the globe safe for human habitation. Dr. R. W. Cilento, formerly of Adelaide, and now Senior Medical Officer and Chief Quarantine Officer in the north-eastern division, told his audience that Australia had demonstrated to the world that the conquest of climate was primarily and essentially the conquest of disease. She had a greater proportion of purely white people living in the tropics than any other country. Those white men and women of the second and third generations lived there without loss of mentality, physique, or fertility.

The address was the Anne Mackenzie Oration a foundation by which Sir Colin Mackenzie, director of the Australian Institute of Anatomy, has perpetuated the memory of his mother.

In Australia, said Dr. Cilento, we had queerly reversed the process by which other people had adapted their country to their needs. The tenacity of our explorers and pioneers gave us a heritage stretching from the equator through more than 40 degrees of latitude, and the conservatism of our English ancestors harnessed it to the task of growing English products in the English way for the English-speaking markets.

Holding as an article of faith the idea that white men could not live in the tropics, Australia had not only successfully implanted her people for several generations in a tropical and sub-tropical land, but had coerced it into the semblance of the home land from which its settlers had come. The people had taken a country that, climatically speaking, was everywhere different from the British Isles, and in areas which pre-eminently owed their allegiance to the tropics, had produced in increasing profusion the fruits and products of temperate, or even cold, lands.

Value Of New Guinea

"In that struggle for progress, which is pre-eminently the establishment of a beneficent accord between man and his constantly changing environment, human will is the dominating factor," Dr. Cilento said. "Nowhere, perhaps, is that more true than of Australia.

"We claim a semi-tropical and tropical continent, supremely free from disease; we have the suzerainty in New Guinea of a native dependency that can be to Australia what the Dutch East Indies have been to Holland, and we stand perhaps on the threshold of events as revolutionary as those which transferred the seat of world interest from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic—for events are every day more clearly demonstrating the increasing importance in world politics of the Pacific. The conquest of tropical disease has placed in our hands the key of our destiny, and we may well take stock of our responsibilities."

Strange Beliefs

Stressing the conquest of disease by science in comparatively a very short span of years, and the queer beliefs which persisted well on in the 19th century, Dr. Cilento said:—"The interest that one finds today in so-called occult phenomena, the readiness with which people will accept as possible the story of any incident that appears to defy the established laws of science, the gratitude with which the man in the street will receive the suggestion that his bunion is due to the conjunction of the planets Saturn and Mercury, rather than alter the shape of his shoe, indicate how close to the surface is our passion for the answer that relieves us of personal responsibility."

Until 1870 people thought that disease, particularly fever, was due to a secret and inexplicable alteration of the air, infecting men's bodies. And "air" was synonymous with climate. Sixty years ago there was an army order instructing troops in India to march at right angles to the wind when cholera was present to avoid the danger of contaminated air. Perspiration was regarded as a preventive of

many diseases, and sojourners in the tropics were instructed to swathe themselves in flannel.

Now the "air," the "climate," "meteorological conditions," "mephitic vapors," "divine wrath," and such defences of ignorance and incompetence were no longer invoked, but the man in the street, unaware of the change, cherished all the catchwords.

Man had largely overcome climate. For instance, England had been transformed from a land of fens and harshness by the extension of the vegetation of the tropics and the semi-tropics. Such transformation was one of the main themes of civilisation.

Work Of Science

After having stressed the terrible toll of the tropics on whites a few decades ago, Dr. Cilento detailed the researches which had led to the removal of the scourges of malaria, fevers, cholera, and so on.

"The microscope," he said, "revealed and classified ever-increasing numbers of parasites, while in laboratories scientists grew on culture media, the demons that produced corruption of the air and pestilence," and bottled in test-tubes the different organisms whose varying effects on the human body had been ascribed to "differences due to climate."

Such discoveries had been of immense value in dealing with diseases prevalent in the tropics, and the recent researches into the association between food and health might be no less important. If civilisation used that knowledge it could lay the whole world under tribute to redress the balance, for both the disease and the deficiencies of diet were controllable, although control was a complex problem.

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MAWSON'S FILM OF ANTARCTIC

Shown To Royal Geographical Society

LONDON, February 27.

Despite the disadvantage of there being no apparatus to reproduce sound effects, a crowded gathering at a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society, including Lord and Lady Stonehaven, enjoyed Sir Douglas Mawson's Antarctic film, which, it was announced, would shortly be produced in colors.

The spectators were charmed with the magnificence of the close-ups of icebergs, and were intensely amused by the antics of penguins and the fights of the sea lions.

Admiral Sir William Goodenough, who presided, said that the film showed that work in the Antarctic was a real man's job.

News Mail 4-3-33

Antarctic Research

BRITAIN'S decision to place its territories in the Antarctic under the control of Australia was made to a large extent because of the work done by a South Australian who is regarded as the intellectual son of the great scientist Sir

Edgeworth David and the mental brother of the great explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton. This is Prof. Sir Douglas Mawson, of the Adelaide University. His work in the Antarctic has done as much as any single factor in consolidating the British grip on the frigid wastes.

Although he is called an Australian, Sir Douglas Mawson comes from Yorkshire, the true home of all Mawsons, Rawsons, and Dawsons. He came here as a young man, and began a career so brilliant that he was one of the youngest men to receive the crown of scientists, a Fellowship of the Royal Society.

At present he is in London to secure the public exhibition of a film of the Australian Antarctic Expedition of 1931.

News 6-2-33

The first University term began today. Lectures will start on Wednesday.

Preliminary meetings have been called for students in the various subjects. These will be held during the week.

Sir Douglas Mawson, who is in England, and Dr. R. C. Bald, who is also abroad, will be absent for a time.

Sir Douglas is expected back during the first term, but Dr. Bald will not return this year.

Mr. A. Biagini, lecturer in English composition, is studying economics in England. His place will be taken by Mr. S. Moyle, head master of the School of Mines and Industries.

Adv. 4-3-33

FORMER RHODES SCHOLARS MEET

Mr. Thomson, K.C., Chairman Of New Association

MELBOURNE, March 3.

The first conference of the Association of Rhodes Scholars in Australia was held at Trinity College, Melbourne, on Monday and Tuesday, and was attended by delegates from Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, and Queensland. It was expected that Mr. Justice Halse Rogers would be present as a delegate from New South Wales, but a rearrangement of court work at the last moment made it impossible for him to leave Sydney. Mr. Harry Thomson, K.C. (South Australia) was elected chairman.

It was decided to send a message of sympathy to relatives of Mr. T. A. L. Davy, Attorney-General for Western Australia, who represented that State as Rhodes scholar from 1909 till 1912, and died suddenly in Perth on February 8.

Carrying Out Founder's Objects

Among other matters, the conference discussed the working of the scholarship system in Australia, both as regards the selection of scholars—especially the part played therein by returned scholars—and the extent to which scholars have subsequently fulfilled the objects of the founder.

On the latter question it was the feeling of those present that hitherto scholars have not done everything possible to realise those objects, and the conference endorsed Lord Lothian's dictum, "The ideal Rhodes scholar should be a man outstanding in quality, either of intellect or of character, or of both."

The conference decided to urge upon the Rhodes trustees the desirability of both the Warden of Rhodes House (Mr. Carl Allen) and the general secretary of the Trust (the Marquis of Lothian) visiting Australia at as early a date as can be conveniently arranged. It also expressed the hope that all Rhodes scholars would enrol themselves as members of the newly-formed Oxford Society.

It was resolved to proceed with a proposal, emanating from the constituent conference held in Melbourne two years ago, to publish a Rhodes scholar periodical, consisting of signed articles upon matters of public importance.

Oxford Medical Curriculum

The constituent conference had asked the trustees whether they would endeavor to induce the authorities of Oxford University to grant scholars who had completed three years of medical course at an Australian University such "standing" as would enable them to complete the requirements for a degree in medicine during their tenure of the Rhodes scholarship. The answer, which was received at the recent conference, indicated that the conditions governing the medical curriculum in Oxford are such that there is no probability of a movement in the matter bearing fruit.

It was agreed that a portion of the time of each future conference should be definitely set aside for discussion of public questions.

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University First Term

This year's first term of the University of Adelaide will begin on Monday, and lectures will be resumed on March 13. The chief clerk at the University (Mr. H. B. Henderson) said yesterday that the number of entries made for lectures was approximately the same as last year, but there was a slight increase in the number of new students beginning law and medicine.

Several welcomes to "freshers" will be given during the next fortnight, the first of them being the commencement social to be given in the Refectory. On Friday the Adelaide University Student Christian Movement will welcome women "freshers" at afternoon tea in the Refectory and the Adelaide University Women's Union will entertain new women students at tea in the Refectory on Wednesday, March 15.