

SCIENCE CONGRESS.

The Science Congress of the New Zealand Institute was attended by a number of the scientific officers of the Government, and by permission of the Hon. the Minister of Internal Affairs the Government Astronomer was present at the meeting and exhibited the following: (1) Photographs of the solar corona; (2) photographs of the moon and surrounding stars; (3) a nomogram for transit instrument star factors. He also gave addresses on—(1) Tables of mathematical functions; (2) the harmonic analysis of tidal observations and the prediction of tides; (3) the almucantar method of observations for the determination of time and latitude.

STAFF.

Honorary Scientific Adviser: The Observatory suffered a severe loss in the death on the 29th October, 1918, of Charles William Adams, who acted as Honorary Scientific Adviser to the Observatory for a number of years.

The Observatory has suffered serious loss by the deaths in action of three brilliant young men—Lieutenant Valentine Blake, formerly Professional Assistant; Bombardier Norman Shrimpton, Professional Cadet; Sergeant Hubert Earle Girdlestone, formerly Professional Assistant.

EFFECT OF THE WAR ON THE OBSERVATORY.

The matters which require urgent attention, and which the war has delayed are—(1) The provision of suitable office accommodation and storage-rooms, as at present all office-work has to be carried on in a small unsuitable storeroom above the clock-room, and the clock-room and the transit-room are crowded with books and apparatus; (2) the provision of a room for radio-telegraphy; (3) the erection of a library where the Observatory publications may be arranged and made available for departmental use, together with a room in which astronomers may meet and consult the astronomical publications.

BOARD OF ADVICE.

In the older Observatories much advantage is derived from the advice of Scientific Boards. Thus, at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, the Astronomer Royal has the assistance of such a Board, which is composed of seven Fellows of the Royal Society, seven Fellows of the Royal Astronomical Society, the Cambridge and the Oxford University Professors of Astronomy, and the Hydrographer to the Admiralty. Similar Boards are in operation at many other British Observatories. At the Melbourne Observatory such a Board has been in existence for many years, and during the war one was established at each of the Adelaide and the Sydney Observatories.

In order to cope with the large increase of scientific work it is recommended that there should be a Board of this kind in connection with the Observatory of New Zealand. The Board could be part of the larger scheme suggested by the International Research Council, London, for the co-ordination of scientific work.

PROGRAMME FOR SCIENTIFIC WORK.

If it is intended that New Zealand is to take her place among the countries that carry on scientific astronomical work, then the highly important programme approved by the Astronomer-Royal, Sir Frank W. Dyson, F.R.S., and by the Royal Astronomical Society, London, should be immediately put in hand. The unique position of New Zealand in the Southern Hemisphere, providing as it does excellent sites for observatories farther south than any existing British Observatories, makes the responsibility of the Dominion in this matter a serious one. The important observations that have already been taken should be reduced and published, and the current work should be kept up to date.

Unless these matters are attended to New Zealand will lag far behind in scientific progress.

The Under-Secretary,
Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington.

C. E. ADAMS,
Government Astronomer.

VIII. REPORT OF THE CONSERVATOR OF FISH AND GAME.

Rotorua, 11th June, 1919.

I have the honour to submit my report of the work which has been done in connection with the fresh-water fisheries at Rotorua and Taupo districts during the past season, November, 1918, to May, 1919.

During the year just ended the following works in connection with the trout-fisheries in the thermal district have been successfully carried out: (1) Marketing of saleable trout; (2) addition to food-supply for the trout; (3) destruction of shags; (4) trout-hatchery operations; (5) scientific experiments.

No work in connection with the thinning-out of poor and diseased fish during the close season was carried out at Lake Taupo on account of the scarcity of suitable labour, and none at Rotorua on account of the wonderful improvement made in the condition of the fish. It was thought that it would not be advisable to reduce the numbers by this means any longer.

The following return of the business done in connection with the sale of marketable fish at the Rotorua depot shows an increase in the revenue returns as compared with last year, and also demonstrates the general improvement made in the condition of the fish. Thus last year the number of fish sold was 20,270, and the weight of them was 51,017 lb., whereas this year the record shows that 19,163 fish, weighing 55,760 lb., were sold, thus showing that this year 1,107 fish were sold less than last year, yet the weight has increased by 4,743 lb. No netting was done in Lake Rotorua