

SCIENTISTS' LACK OF MUTUAL RESPECT

"Play Fast and Loose"

STIR AT CONGRESS

LONDON, September 28.

The extent to which scientists disagree was shown at today's meeting of the geographical section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Professor Arthur Holmes, discussing Wegner's theory of drifting continents, said there was no escape from the deduction that slow, overwhelmingly powerful currents were generated beneath the surface at various times in the earth's long mysterious history.

Mr. A. R. Hinks, a distinguished lecturer in astronomy, caused surprise by accusing scientists of not minding their own business. He said there were geologists who did not scruple to play fast and loose with every science but their own. Geologists and meteorologists had a habit of thinking they could move the Poles about at their pleasure. They would have to be more precise, and pay more respect to the best opinion in astronomy.

"We shall not really advance until we respect scientific law and morals, the simplest of which is that nobody may adopt a principle contrary to the best opinion in another man's subject," he said.

Why Skulls Were Thick

Long queues formed to listen to the scientists and "room full" notices appeared in many halls. Professor Elliott Smith, describing the Peking skull, suggested the possibility of primitive man having developed an enormously thick skull when they began to use sticks and stones as weapons. He said the matter was one which the speculative could seriously discuss, but there must be some definite explanation of the thickness.

Professor Ruggles Gates (University of London), by urging the necessity for eugenics, reiterated the dangers of increasing the number of the feeble-minded by breeding from bad stocks. Discussing whether modern civilisation was racing towards destruction, he said that Britain's post-war enfranchisement of paupers, would prove a milestone on the downward path of decadence unless it was reversed.

Mr. Wicksteed Armstrong asked how long we would continue to pin our faith to alms, doles, and compulsory insurance, and to the patching up of blotched humanity in hospitals, mental asylums, and prisons, in order to breed more incapables. He described the wonderful garden city Alfred Datchet built at Strasburg, assisted by the municipality and local manufacturers. It was open only to young married artisans of the middle class, who had passed severe tests of physical, mental, and moral fitness. There, births exceeded deaths by 35.6 a thousand, compared with 2.7 in Strasburg. The children were the tallest, healthiest, and most beautiful in the country.