

BRITISH SCIENTISTS' VISIT.

Chat with Australian Organizer.

The important duties of Australian organizer in connection with the visit in 1914 of a large body of distinguished British scientists has been allotted to a keen and able young enthusiast, Dr. A. C. Rivett, of the Melbourne University. He is now in Adelaide getting in touch with local projects for the entertainment and meetings of the members of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, and at the Adelaide University on Tuesday afternoon Dr. Rivett discussed the broad details of the programme.

Dr. Rivett was the Victorian Rhodes scholar in 1907, and during his sojourn in England he met some of the scientists who propose to come to Australia next year. He will again visit the old country shortly to be present at the great Birmingham meeting of the association, where he will lay before the members the plans that have been made for the Australian tour. Dr. Rivett will leave Melbourne on June 11, and will return early next year.

"I have got 15 months' leave of absence from the Melbourne University in order to do this organizing work," he remarked, "and the Commonwealth will defray the whole of my expenses. The British Association for the Advancement aims to secure some connection between the public and the people actually doing technical and scientific work. The usual membership is about 3,000 or more, and meetings are held annually at some important city outside London. There is tremendous competition among the cities to have the honour of being the scene of these memorable gatherings. The city absolutely gives itself up to hospitality and entertainment. During the last 10 years the average cost of a meeting has been £3,000. This year's gathering will be held at Birmingham, and Sir Oliver Lodge will be the President. A fund of £6,000 is being raised to meet expenses, and that amount is quite independent of the income of the association itself. All fees received from the members are distributed in grants for research work. During its history the association has met twice in Canada, once in South Africa, but never in Australia.

"The Federal Government has granted £15,000 for the overseas expenses of the members of the association, and it is expected that we shall be visited by at least 150 of them in 1914, and no doubt a number of non-official tourists. The main party will not stay in Fremantle for any length of time, but probably an advance body will devote some attention to Western Australia. The first important stop will be here in Adelaide from August 8 to 12. During that sojourn there will probably be two public lectures by the most distinguished members of the association and also addresses in connection with two of the many sections into which the association is divided for scientific business. We hope to give the British scientists every facility for sightseeing, and their stay will mean a considerable amount of private hospitality in entertainment and accommodation. It is hoped to place all the visitors as guests of citizens, and only those who will comprise the secretariat will go to an hotel. That will be necessary for harmonious co-operation in their duties.

"Committees have been at work for some time on the preliminary arrangements, which ought to be very ample and efficient. A deputation will wait upon the Acting Premier to-morrow morning concerning the questions of the expenses of the members of the association, railway travelling, and the issue of a South Australian handbook. Railway travelling facilities have been promised already. The handbook will be a most important feature, for, unless this great meeting of British scientists shall give Australia a huge advertisement it will be, from many points of view, a failure. It is essential that no effort should be spared to convey to the visitors such an impression—for most of them are professional lecturers—that they will do the Commonwealth service when they return. The handbook will be largely pictorial and explanatory, and it will also contain contributions on relative scientific subjects, written by experienced men without charge. The London press will be well catered for in reference to the visit of the association, for accompanying it will be a gifted journalist in Mr. E. S. Grew, who a few years ago reported on the big Cholera Commission. His expenses will be paid by the Commonwealth Government. Some of the visitors will probably remain to study various phases of scientific interest. The Commonwealth Government is very keen on that."

THE BRITISH SCIENCE ASSOCIATION.

THE AUSTRALIAN VISIT.

The coming to Australia next year of a contingent of at least 150 members of the British Association for the Advancement of Science is properly regarded as one of the most important achievements in the progress of scientific work in this part of the world, and therefore no effort should be spared to ensure the complete success of the gathering. For several months arrangements have been in progress in the various States to get everything in trim for the meeting of scientists, and Dr. A. C. D. Rivett, of the Melbourne University staff, is in Adelaide on the same mission. He has obtained leave from his University in order that he might undertake the organising work for the meeting, and on June 11 he will leave Melbourne for England to attend the next meeting of the association, to be held at Birmingham. He will then place before the association members an outline of the programme for the 1914 meeting in Australia, and coming back ahead of the party will finalise all the arrangements for the visit. So much importance is attached to the 1914 gathering that the Commonwealth Government have voted £15,000 for the oversea expenses of the visitors, and are defraying the cost of Dr. Rivett's mission to England.

When seen on Tuesday Dr. Rivett, who was the Victorian Rhodes Scholar of 1907, spoke enthusiastically about the forthcoming visit of the British scientists to Australia. "The association," he said, "is the biggest in England. It aims at securing some connection between the public and the people who are actually doing technical scientific work. Its usual membership is about 3,000, and it meets annually at some important city outside London. There is tremendous competition among the cities for the honor of the annual meeting, which lasts about a week, and the local governing authorities, as well as private citizens, lay themselves out to give the members as good a time as possible. During the last 10 years the average cost of these meetings has been £3,000. For this year's meeting, to be held at Birmingham, with Sir Oliver Lodge as president, a fund of £6,000 is being raised by the city of Birmingham. This expenditure for the meetings is absolutely independent of any income of the association itself. The fees from members go in the way of grants for research work, particularly dealing with national problems.

"Twice in the history of the association the meetings have been held in Canada and once in South Africa. It has never been to Australia. We got our chance now, and have received a vote of £15,000 from the Federal Government for the overseas expenses to ensure the visit of at least 150 official members, and possibly many more non-official members. The main party will not stay at Fremantle for any length of time, but probably an advance party will visit Western Australia in order to have a look into the mineral possibilities of the State.

"The first important stay will be in Adelaide. Meetings will be held here from August 8 to August 12. During that time it is proposed that two public lectures shall be delivered by two of the most distinguished visitors, members of the association, and there will be addresses in the many sections into which the association is divided. It is hoped that every chance will be given to members to see what they can of the surroundings by means of excursions into the country. This will call for a considerable amount of private hospitality in the provision of motors and in the housing of members during the time they will be here. It is expected that all members will be accommodated privately, with the exception of the section known as the secretariat, which numbers about 50, and includes secretaries and recorders of the different sections. These visitors will have to reside at one of the principal hotels so that they may confer frequently on the business side of the visit.

Committees have been at work for a considerable time making preliminary arrangements in all the capitals, and to-morrow a deputation will wait upon the Acting Premier and consult with him regarding expenses and railway travelling, and the very important question of issuing a South Australian State handbook. Free railway travelling has already been promised. The handbook will be a most important feature of the meeting because it will contain information of great value to the visitors, and should be a good advertisement for the State. It is essential that no efforts should be spared to make a favorable impression on the visitors, most of whom are professional lecturers, who, upon their return to England will be able to give Australia a splendid advertisement. The handbook will of course be a valuable guide to them, as it will contain a large number of scientific contributions, all of which will be written by experts, without charge.

"The London press will be well catered for, as arrangements have been made for Mr. E. S. Grew, a distinguished journalist and scientist, to accompany the party. After the Adelaide meeting the scientists will go on to Melbourne, where they will spend a week, then to Sydney for another week, and after that to Brisbane, where the meetings will last four days. Every effort will be made to induce specialists to remain in Australia after the meetings, in order to pursue further studies into the many scientific problems affecting the country."