

been hindered by the constant struggles to find out what we had and what we wanted, and it was only when they obtained the services of trustworthy statisticians that the Department got into clear order. In the field of public health trustworthy statistics were of equal importance, and he therefore recommended to the public the appeal which had been made for additional funds, and promised to do all he could to help on the work of the laboratories. D. H.

The Imperial College.

CLAIM TO UNIVERSITY STATUS.

A MEETING in support of the claim of the Imperial College of Science and Technology for power to confer degrees and for university status was held at the Central Hall, Westminster, on Friday, June 4. Lord Morris, who presided, stated that the meeting was not called in hostility to any university or Government Department, or in disparagement of the atmosphere created by the universities. The governing body, the professorial staff, and the students, now numbering 1300, were unanimous in support of the claim of the Imperial College for power to confer degrees in its own subjects or faculties. The students were seriously handicapped by having to go to an external body for a degree, because of the current preference in the industrial and professional worlds for a degree to a diploma. Lord Morris moved a resolution urging the Prime Minister, the Lord President of the Council, and the President of the Board of Education to take the matter into serious consideration. The resolution also declared that any further delay would cause a growing sense of injustice.

Prof. W. W. Watts, who seconded the motion, pointed out that the report of the Departmental Committee, the recommendations of which in 1906 led directly to the establishment of the Imperial College, was based on a vision of a vast technological and Imperial institution, not confined to mere technical instruction, but devoted to the highest education and training in research in both pure science and technology. The Departmental Committee had stated clearly the reasons against incorporating the Imperial College in the University of London, pointing out that if the college was to be able to adapt itself to the ever-changing conditions of industry it must be free from the academic trammels of an education regulated, and rightly regulated, by other aims.

Mr. H. G. Wells, speaking in support of the motion, warned the meeting that in approaching the Lord President of the Council and the President of the Board of Education the delegates would have to combat the suspicion that their proposal involved a system of education and training likely to turn out men and women of narrow culture, mere technical experts without broad views. The curse of education in London had been the grandiose ideas of people who could not distinguish between the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and the university conditions of London. It was almost impossible to conceive the widely separated college units in London co-operating successfully to form a single efficient university.

Sir Ernest Rutherford, speaking as a representative on the governing body of the Imperial College of the Dominion of New Zealand, said it was not generally recognised how much energy is spent in developing the pure science side of the Imperial College. It was only right and proper that the students, and particularly the oversea students, should have a degree where degree-work had been done, and the degree should be conferred by the teachers, and not by any

outside body. Surely we might broaden our ideas of university education in general. We had never before had an institution teaching technology on such a vast scale and to such a high standard as the Imperial College does. There was no precedent for the college, and therefore there could be no precedent against its claim to confer its own degrees. Subsequent speakers included Mr. J. A. Spender, Sir Richard Redmayne, and the Rector of the Imperial College, Sir Alfred Keogh. The resolution, modified slightly in accordance with suggestions made by Mr. H. G. Wells and others, was carried with one dissident.

The Smoke Nuisance.

THE Manchester City Council is one of the few local authorities which have gone out of their way not only to put the smoke clauses of the old Public Health Act into force, but also to investigate the cost to the community of the smoke nuisance. With true wisdom it has realised that the æsthetic sense of the average man is controlled by his pocket, and that the direct road to reform is to make him understand how much he might save by a clean atmosphere.

We have received from the Air Pollution Advisory Board of the Manchester City Council a pamphlet entitled "The Black Smoke Tax," and although it deals mainly with an elaborate investigation into the relative cost in fuel, soap, and starch in an industrial and a residential centre, there is an introduction which reviews in brief but expressive language other causes of loss and damage which follow in the train of black smoke. The Board says:—"The damage is both æsthetic and economic. The look of things suffers. The value of things suffers. Everybody suffers and, since everybody suffers, it is a long time before anybody protests. If the damage were done suddenly there would be a general outcry, but it is done gradually. Thousands of Manchester people live their lives from start to finish in the midst of black smoke and have come to regard it as a normal condition of life. It is only in modern times that we have realised that the nuisance is preventable and that public economy, public health, and happiness alike call for its prevention."

The investigation has been conducted on the lines adopted in Pittsburgh, U.S.A., which showed an annual loss amounting to 4l. a head of the population. A large number of different classes of houses in Manchester (industrial) and Harrogate (residential) were personally visited and the weekly washing bill as nearly as possible ascertained. The net result was an additional expenditure in Manchester of more than 242,000l. annually on this item alone. The committee employed on this investigation concludes its report as follows: "As a result of years of patient investigation, coupled with strict rejection of all doubtful evidence, they can state emphatically that it would well repay Manchester to expend a large amount of thought and money on any measures that would help to reduce its enormous yearly smoke tax of at least three-quarters of a million pounds per annum."

The Ministry of Health has now taken the matter in hand and appointed a Smoke Abatement Committee to consider ways and means of abolishing smoke. The report of this committee will no doubt contain recommendations which will give local authorities greater facilities and stronger inducements for dealing with this pest of industrial towns. Coal smoke is opposed to every principle of economy, health, comfort, and cleanliness. It is a national scourge which has been too long tolerated.

J. B. C.