GENERAL NOTES.

THE FOURTEENTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF HYGIENE AND DEMOGRAPHY.

By SIR SHIRLEY MURPHY.

The Fourteenth International Congress of Hygiene and Demography was held in Berlin, and lasted from the 23rd to the 29th of September, a large portion of the members of the Congress proceeding on the 29th to Hamburg, where, on the following day, opportunity was given for seeing the many matters of interest which are associated with the sanitary administration of that important port.

The Congress was divided into eight sections :

- I. Hygienic microbiology and parasitology ;
- II. Dietetic hygiene, hygienic physiology ;
- III. Hygiene of childhood and schools ;
- IV. Professional hygiene and care of the working classes ;
- V. Combating infectious diseases and care of the sick ;
- VI. (a) Hygiene of dwellings, townships, and waters ;
(b) Hygiene of traffic, life saving ;
- VII. Military, colonial, and naval hygiene ;
- VIII. Demography.

With so extended a programme, it was obviously impossible for a member to do more than attach himself to a particular section, or to select particular subjects in different sections, and devote his attention to them. In this matter he was greatly assisted by the fact that he was provided with an excellent abstract of every paper read presented in three languages, German, English, and French ; and the daily issued Congressblatt informed him, not only of the subjects to be discussed on the day in question, but gave a brief account of what had occurred in each section on the preceding day.

In Section I., the principal subjects of discussion were the etiology of tuberculosis, the bacilli of the typhoid group, the cocci of meningitis and similar bacteria, the etiology of syphilis, pathogenic protozoa and spirochaetae, insects as carriers of diseases, the methods of testing sera, and modern methods of immunisation. These subjects were specially dealt with by Arloing, Flügge, Löffler, Metchnikoff, Hewlett, Nuttall, Ehrlich Roux, Calmette, and other well-known investigators. The preservation of food-stuffs, and the necessary minimum of proteids, entered largely into the discussion in Section II. The care of infants, milk supplies, school physicians, and overwork were among the subjects considered in Section III. Section IV., in the main, related to industrial diseases and their methods of prevention. In Section V., disinfection and preventive inoculations were discussed, together with meat inspection. The titles of the other sections sufficiently indicate the matter dealt with. In Section VII. Ronald Ross and Ashburton Thompson contributed valuable papers. In the middle of the week a plenary meeting was held, in which Dr. H. S. HALDANE, of Oxford, gave an address on some recent investigations in the hygiene of subterranean and subaqueous work ; Dr. CHANTEMESSE, of Paris, on the serotherapie of

typhoid fever; and Dr. SCHATTENFROH, of Vienna, on the principles of the hygienic protection of water supplies.

It is impossible here to enter on any detailed discussion of the papers which were read, or the conclusions which were arrived at; but it will interest English reader to know that no effort was made to maintain the position of Koch on the question of the amount of risk to man from bovine tuberculosis, and that the views expressed on this subject were not different from those at which the reader of the report of the English Commission necessarily arrives. Dr. H. HALDANE's paper contained material which needs to be studied by all concerned in subaqueous and subterranean works, particularly as it tends to lessen the difficulties and expense which now attend such undertakings.

An important feature of the Congress was a comprehensive and well arranged exhibition. The Imperial Board of Health, the Institute of Infectious Diseases, the Hygienic Institutes of Berlin, Dresden, and Frankfort, the Medical Department of the Prussian War Office, and various Universities had exhibits. The exhibition of statistics, including those relating to insurance, infant mortality, and other subjects connected with hygiene were especially good. Other exhibits were in groups, relating to infants' and children's hygiene, tuberculosis, infectious diseases, bacteriology, water supply and sewage, hospital buildings and disinfection, industrial diseases, heating and lighting, cremation, and a large number of scientific apparatus.

The Congress was largely attended, the number of those taking part in it probably amounting to some 4,000 or 5,000 persons. It was admirably organised, and nothing could have exceeded the careful regard which was had for the comfort and enjoyment of the members, and the completeness with which they were afforded the opportunity of making themselves acquainted with all. Berlin and Hamburg could offer to those interested in hygiene and demography. The municipal and personal hospitality in both cities was of the most generous kind.

NOTES ON LEGISLATION AND LAW CASES.

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SEWERS.—*Right to support—Mines and minerals—Adjacent lands—Public Health Act, 1875 (38 & 39 Vict. c. 55), ss. 15, 16, 175, 176, 308; Public Health Act, 1875 (Support of Sewers) Amendment Act, 1883 (46 & 47 Vict. c. 37), ss. 2, 3, 4, 5.*

In this case Parker J. said that the rights of the corporation, under the conveyance, to subjacent or adjacent support depended on the principles of the common law, and not on statute. It was doubtful whether the umpire's award of 1878 could have been made except by agreement; but in *re Dudley Corporation* (1881) 8 Q.B.D. 86 showed that the umpire ought to have regarded the fact that the Public Health Act, 1875, conferred on the corporation both the subjacent and adjacent right to support, and there was no evidence that he had not done so. The right to subjacent and adjacent support to the land conveyed was not disputed, and the Public Health Act, 1875, gave a right to subjacent