

"THE FLINT AND STEEL OF MIND ON MIND"

NEXT month New Zealand will play host to a large number of distinguished visitors when some 400 scientists from many parts of the world meet for the Seventh Pacific Science Congress. Some of them, like Sir Peter Buck, the self-exiled New Zealander who is director of the Bishop Museum, Honolulu, are well known to the public; others are familiar only to those interested in the subjects in which they have specialised. And some of the topics they will discuss, such as dental caries among Pacific peoples, will be only too well known, on a practical

applying himself directly to agricultural and economic problems finds himself driven back deep down into fundamental problems of what happens and how it happens. And some of these fundamental problems, although they may appear to have a peculiar interest to a particular branch of science, often are of much wider importance."

To illustrate his remarks Dr. Archey pointed out that geologists at the Congress were going to deliberate on how mountains were formed and how waves worked. There would be detailed mathematical analyses of the movement of sea waves. Seismic waves were involved because seismograms recorded constant



SIR PETER BUCK

thesis and its publication, so that this means of exchanging information was slow. Then, too, misunderstandings and misinterpretations which arise could be immediately cleared up at a conference, while the fire and light produced from the flint and steel of mind on mind when men of similar interest were thrown together for a month meant that progress was achieved much more rapidly than would ever be possible by correspondence and the exchange of publications.

At the same time, Congress was seized with the importance of the quick dissemination of publications. It was hoped that an abstract of every paper to be presented to Congress would be available in duplicated form before Congress opened and that a summarised report on the deliberations would be published very shortly after the conclusion of the conference. Later a full report would be brought out in book form.

Finally, Dr. Archey was asked who provided the funds for Congress and why was the conference divided into two sessions, one in Auckland, and one in Christchurch?

Each Congress was financed by the country acting as host. In the case this year of New Zealand a grant of £10,000 had been made by the Government. This was supplemented by New Zealand members of Congress giving a £1 subscription and by certain interested bodies contributing funds. In Auckland, for instance, the cost of providing hospitality and entertainment for the guests would be met from moneys provided by the Auckland University College and the Auckland Institute.

The Congress was divided into two sessions because it was considered that one week of formal deliberation at a time was sufficient, and the two locations were chosen so that visitors would have time to see as much as possible of the country and its people. Furthermore, the break between sessions allowed a certain amount of unhurried discussion and this made for successful deliberations.

RADIO AND THE CONGRESS

ARRANGEMENTS have been made by the Talks Department of the NZBS for talks to be given before and during the Pacific Science Congress, which will be held in Auckland from Wednesday, February 2, to Tuesday, February 8, and in Christchurch from February 16 to February 22.

Here are the details of the arrangements to date:

Sunday, January 30, at 8.45 p.m.: Main National and Commercial stations linked for a talk by Dr. R. A. Falla, Director of the Dominion Museum, President of the Congress, and President of the Royal Society of New Zealand, on "The Seventh Pacific Science Congress."

Monday, January 31, at 7.15 p.m.: Main National stations linked for a talk by Dr. Gilbert Archey, Director of the War Memorial Museum, Auckland, Chairman of the Auckland Committee of the Congress and Secretary-General, on "The Work of the Pacific Science Congress."

Tuesday, February 1, at 7.15 p.m.: Main National stations linked for a talk by Professor R. S. Allen, Professor of Geology, Canterbury University College, and Chairman of the Christchurch Committee of the Congress, on "The Purpose of the Pacific Science Congress."

There will also be daily news bulletins during the two weeks of the Congress from 1YA and 3YA, and possibly from other stations, between 7.0 p.m. and 7.15 p.m.

plane at least, to many, while others (problems of eustatism in the Pacific Basin, and animals pathogens and their vectors in the Pacific, for instance) will convey little to most of us.

But neither a listing of those taking part in the Congress nor a schedule of the subjects to be discussed will give the non-scientist anything more than a very hazy idea of what the conference is about. Therefore *The Listener* approached Dr. Gilbert Archey, director of the Auckland War Memorial Museum, who is Secretary-General to the Congress, to explain in general terms why it is being held and what results may be expected from it.

The principal aim of Congress as laid down in its constitution was, he said, "to initiate and promote co-operation in the study of scientific problems relating to the Pacific region, more particularly those affecting the prosperity and well-being of Pacific peoples."

How did Congress implement this aim?

First, by planning the co-ordination of research, and secondly by investigating specific problems, which might be either practical problems, whose solution would be of immediate interest to the world, or fundamental, theoretical questions, which were apparently of purely academic interest.

Fundamental Problems

"The community expects scientific research to result in increased food, decreased disease and the exploitation of economic resources for its benefit. Sometimes the scientist, from motives of curiosity, pursues subjects which the general public would probably consider remote from general interest, yet there are still many occasions when a scientist in

minute earth tremors which it was now understood were being caused by distant sea storms. All this had a bearing upon the fundamental question of how mountains were formed and why waves worked, but it also had a bearing upon the immediate practical problem of earthquakes, for the results of the fundamental research would assist the seismologists in forecasting earthquakes and in enabling architects and engineers to build earthquake-resisting structures in earthquake areas.

Co-ordination Essential

To-day science was so complex that the co-ordination of research was essential and to plan this was one of the main purposes of the Congress. Co-operation was necessary not only between countries but also between different branches of science, and at the first session of Congress each division would appoint a research planning committee. It was hoped that these plans would be drawn up by the end of the Auckland session so that they could be discussed at the first Christchurch meeting. Then the results of all the discussions would be handed to a Congress research committee (representative of each scientific division) and its report would be discussed at the last plenary session of Congress. So important was this work, which many of the scientists concerned had been studying for the past year in preparation for the Congress, that Dr. Archey anticipated a number of the scientists would absent themselves from the Congress meetings to devote their full effort to the research plan problem.

Because scientific problems were world-wide in their complexity, although this was a Pacific Congress concerned

with the application of science in the Pacific, it was not surprising to find a world interest in the Congress. Such world organisations as Unesco and the Food and Agricultural Organisation were sending representatives, while individual European countries, besides the Pacific ones, were sending delegates. European interest stemmed not only from the fact that several European countries had administrative responsibility for Pacific areas, but also resulted from their having sent scientific expeditions to the Pacific. In consequence, some of the European scientists possessed a knowledge which was invaluable to the deliberations of the Congress.

More Rapid Progress

It might be thought, Dr. Archey continued, that much trouble and expense would be saved and the same ends gained by scientists exchanging their ideas through publications and by correspondence instead of travelling thousands of miles to a conference. Certainly scientific papers were being continually distributed, but there was a lag of approximately a year between the writing of a

THE STORY OF TE RANGIHIROA

WHEN Sir Peter Buck, Director of the Bishop Museum at Honolulu, Professor of Anthropology at Yale, and one of the two Maori Doctors of Literature (the other is Sir Apirana Ngata) arrives in New Zealand on Monday, January 24, to attend the Pacific Science Congress at Auckland and Christchurch, it will be his first visit to his native land since 1935. As a world authority on Polynesia, he will be one of the most important figures at the Congress. During the evening of this coming Sunday, January 23, the four ZB stations and 2ZA will present the first of a series of talks on Maori leaders, by Eric Ramsden, who has chosen Te Rangihira (as Sir Peter Buck is known among his own people) as the subject of his first broadcast.

Sir Peter Buck's career, according to Mr. Ramsden, falls into several distinct phases, but he already had an established reputation as an ethnologist when he resigned his post as Director of Maori Hygiene here, and joined the field staff of the Bishop Museum in Hawaii. His departure from New Zealand, strangely enough, came about through his interest in weaving and plaiting, arts which Maoris usually leave strictly to their womenfolk. Acknowledged as the authority on Maori textiles, his writings on the subject attracted the attention of the Bishop Museum authorities.

Listeners to the Commercial stations will hear more about Sir Peter Buck if they tune in on Sunday to 1ZB at 9.30 p.m., 2ZB at 6.45 p.m., 3ZB at 4.15 p.m., 4ZB at 6.0 p.m., or 2ZA at 6.30 p.m.