

The Liverpool Meeting of the British Association

The meeting of the British Association which concluded on September 19th, was in many ways notable, and marked the successful introduction of various changes in the local and scientific proceedings. In point of numbers it was the third largest meeting (Australia in 1914 excepted) in the long history of the association, but the actual number of tickets taken is not the only criterion for success. Figures are, however, of some value; for one of the objects of the association, namely, to spread knowledge of science and what it stands for, can be most successfully accomplished by an appeal to the public receiving ready response.

While the membership numbered 3,236, not less than 15,000 people attended the free public lectures in Liverpool and the surrounding boroughs, while more than 7,000 paid admission to the Scientific Exhibition held under the auspices of the association in the Central Technical School on September 10-22, and this number does not include members of the association itself, who were admitted free.

Further, the sectional meetings were almost all not merely well attended but often overcrowded, a condition which spoke well for the enthusiasm for scientific knowledge among the members, but also illustrated the attractiveness of the programmes.

The inaugural meeting, when the president delivered his address, was remarkable for the fact that the whole proceedings were broadcasted, and in two halls in Liverpool the wireless version was accompanied by lantern illustrations identical with and shown simultaneously with the originals shown during the address itself in the Philharmonic Hall. The address was well heard in most parts of the British Isles, and was even picked up so far away as Switzerland. This is, indeed, an example of the development of physical science since the last Liverpool meeting held in 1896.

The place of the customary second evening lecture was taken by a most successful scientific soiree given by the local committee at the university. A wonderful series of experimental and other exhibits had been arranged and a most comprehensive programme had been prepared but unfortunately, owing to the awkward lay-out of the university buildings, it must have been nearly impossible for very many of the large and enthusiastic gathering to see properly one half of all the interesting things on view, or to hear many of the excellent series of lectures. Such a soiree, however, is full of value and was greatly appreciated, and the excellence of all the arrangements at it reflected the greatest credit on all those concerned in its organisation.