

MEMORANDUM ON THE INTERNATIONAL MATHEMATICAL CONGRESS

Before the war the International Mathematical Congress met once in four years, the meeting taking place in one of the great scientific centres of Europe. Among other places it has met in Paris, Rome and Cambridge. It has never met in America.

Two years ago the Americans extended an invitation to the Congress to meet on this side of the Atlantic in 1924. This invitation was accepted. The place of meeting was not precisely stipulated but it was understood of course that it would be held in the United States and the expectation was that the meeting place would be one of the great university centres south of the border.

After the very successful meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science held in Toronto last Christmas week it was suggested that the Congress might meet in Canada. Some of the Americans were not content with the proposition. The majority of the committee having the matter in charge however decided favorably and the Chairman has requested the International Mathematical Union to transfer to Canada the privilege of inviting the Congress to meet within her borders. The International Mathematical Union through which such arrangements must be made has signified its readiness to make the transfer and Canada will shortly be formally authorized to go ahead and organize the Congress. It behooves Canada then to make a success of the Congress. Thereto adequate funds are requisite. The Dominion Government has promised financial aid and one must look to other sources also for assistance.

What the Congress would mean for Canada:

1. It would serve as a great intellectual stimulus to the whole country. There would probably be deputations present from about fifteen European countries. Hundreds of American mathematicians would attend. It would be by far the largest and most distinguished gathering of representatives of the mathematical sciences which has ever been held on this continent.
2. It would afford a unique opportunity for cooperation on the part of the English and French speaking Canadians in welcoming our European guests. It should make a strong appeal to our French-Canadian fellow-citizens in view of the fact that the most numerous and most brilliant delegation from the other side of the Atlantic would be that from France, for while France attaches great prestige to intellectual achievements of all kinds she has herself always taken a particularly high rank in the mathematical sciences.
3. Canada would also be doing a service to the Empire inasmuch as she would provide at the same time the occasion for fraternising between the English speaking peoples and the opportunity for the manifestation of goodwill and understanding between them on the one hand and the allied and neutral nations of Europe on the other, for the British