PREFATORY NOTES

I. — Authority.

This number (*i. e.* N° 5 of the series) of the "*Hydrographic Review*" is published in conformity with Article 46 (*a*) of the Statutes of the Bureau, dated 1st December 1923, which Statutes entered into force on 1st January 1925, in accordance with the announcement conveyed to the States Members in Circular Letter N° 11-R of 27th August, 1924.

II. — Withdrawal of Belgium.

A considerable amount of correspondence has taken place between the Belgian Government and the Bureau as to the amount of the annual contribution due from Belgium, the matter eventually being referred to the States Members for decision ; in view of this decision proving adverse to Belgium, the Government of this latter country announced that it would sever its connection with the Bureau, and this information was promulgated by the Bureau in Circular Letter N° 3-R, dated 25th April, 1925.

The withdrawal of Belgium is much to be regretted as it is the first resignation which has taken place in the history of the Bureau. It is true that the Republic of Peru withdrew from the Bureau in 1923, but this was through a misunderstanding, and the interval elapsing between the announcement of its withdrawal and re-adhesion was only a matter of a little over a month. The Belgian defection is also to be regretted on account of the fact that its representative took a very active part in the proceedings of the London Hydrographic Conference in 1919.

III. — Delay in adhesion of Poland and Uruguay.

(*a*) POLAND. No further information of the intentions of Poland in regard to adhering to the Bureau has been received. It will be remembered that in the year 1923 this country's Delegate to the League of Nations announced that his Government proposed to join the Bureau as soon as the necessary authorisation had been given by Parliament, and that in the meantime he forwarded the sum of 4,000 Swiss francs as the first year's contribution ; the Bureau has endeavoured to have this matter placed on a definite

basis but without any success whatever, and it has now been decided, in view of the unsatisfactory state of affairs, that, if nothing further transpires on the subject, the abovementioned sum will be returned to the Government of Poland.

(*b*) URUGUAY. The position as regards this country in its relation to the Bureau is unaltered. As was stated in the previous "*Review*", an encouraging communication had been received from the Government of Uruguay stating that the matter had again been laid before Congress for decision, but, in spite of further correspondence from the Bureau, no further information on the subject has been received.

IV. — Auxiliary languages.

The use of Esperanto, or some other international auxiliary language, for hydrographic purposes is kept constantly in view, but the Directing Committee still considers that the correct procedure is to await the time that an auxiliary language has been sufficiently perfected to be universally adopted as an international medium of expression, but there is no doubt that this time has not arrived yet. The matter will be brought up for discussion at the Hydrographic Conference in the autumn of 1926.

V. — International organisations dealing with subjects allied to Hydrography.

As was forecasted in the last number of the "*Hydrographic Review*", dated May, 1925, an International Geographic Congress was held in Cairo during the month of April of this year, directly under the patronage of H. M. King FOUAD I, and under the auspices of the Union Géographique Internationale, the organisation being carried out by a special Committee of members of the Royal Geographical Society of Egypt ; the meetings were held in Cairo in the very fine building housing the Royal Geographical Society.

The scientific work of the Congress was divided into five sections, *viz.* : —

SECTION I. — Mathematical Geography, Geodesy & Cartography,
President..... Sir Francis YOUNGHUSBAND,
Vice-President... Colonel PERRIER.

SECTION II. — Physical Geography,
President..... Mon. E. DE MARGERIE,
Vice-President... Prof. O. MARINELLI,

SECTION III. — Biological Geography & Geography of Mankind,
President..... Prof. José GALBIS Y RODRIGUEZ,
Vice-President... Prof. P. MICHOTTE.

SECTION IV. — Anthropology & Ethnography,
President..... ABD-EL-RAHIM BEY OSMAN.

SECTION V. — History of Geography & Historical Geography,
President..... Prof. R. ALMAGIA,
Vice-President... Mon. Ch. DE LA RONCIÈRE.

A number of papers on a great variety of subjects were read and in some cases were followed by valuable discussions ; in addition, several special addresses were delivered to the Congress in full session ; it is unnecessary to give herein a summary of the papers read, but full particulars will be found on pages 83-90 of the Official Report of the Congress, Volume I.

The President of the Directing Committee attended the Congress as the representative of this Bureau, and was associated primarily with the Section of Physical Geography, which included Hydrography and Oceanography ; it was realised that a considerable number of those attending the Congress would probably not understand clearly the relationship between Hydrography and Geography, and Admiral PARRY therefore prepared a short statement on the subject, which was produced in pamphlet form and widely distributed ; attached to this was a brief description of the formation and the work of the Bureau ; there is no doubt that this fulfilled its purpose and directed the attention of the delegates to its activities ; an extract of a portion of this pamphlet is reprinted below : —

" I think a few words of explanation in connection with the term " Hydrography " may be useful. The word " Hydrography " is composed of two Greek words meaning " water " and " to draw " or " to write ", that is, the science dealing with the measurement, delineation and description of the waters of the globe ; the definitions of the word given in various dictionaries are generally in agreement and may be briefly summarised as follow : —

" The description of the physical features and conditions of the waters ; the preparation of charts and maps, showing the delineation of the coasts ; the positions of lakes, rivers, seas and oceans, together with the configuration of their bottoms ; the determination of the position and extent of all shoals, rocks, reefs and islands ; the positions of light-houses, beacons and buoys ; the investigation of tidal phenomena ; the nature and velocity of currents ; and the investigation of the alterations which are continually taking place on the coasts and in the depths of harbours, rivers, seas and oceans generally.

" On the occasion of the funeral of the celebrated French Hydrographer, Monsieur BEAUTEMPS-BEAUPRÉ in 1854, the following allusion to hydrography was made by Admiral BAUDIN, the distinguished Explorer :

"Hydrography, which has for its object the determination of the true configuration of the coasts, and also the depth of those seas in their vicinity, is one of the sciences most eminently useful to men. In presenting to mariners the means of navigation, by day and night, through labyrinths of rocks or shoals, they are relieved from anxiety, difficulties and delays ; hydrography is also an auxiliary to the naval forces of a country, and preserves many lives from wrecks ; finally, it facilitates maritime commerce, that great source of national prosperity. For all these reasons no science has greater right to our solicitude, gratitude and respect."

" In tracing the history of the geography of a country we find that maritime exploration, that is, hydrography, has always been a necessity in the first instance and that, after the charting and description of a coast has

been completed, the delineation of the geographical features of its interior follows. As a rule it may be said that geography in a new country cannot be undertaken without some knowledge at least of the hydrography of its coast and approaches, and in this connection it must be remembered especially that the hydrographer himself is very directly interested in the geography of the land adjacent to the sea, although the primary object of his labours is to deal with the coast and the depths of the sea only ; the hydrographer naturally looks at this subject particularly from this point of view, but the value of any hydrographical survey adjacent to the land would be very seriously minimised if the geographical land features were unknown. It is true that the hydrographical work of the present day does not consist of the exploration of new coasts in any great degree, as it may be generally said that the existing hydrographic knowledge of the world is fairly good, but greater accuracy of detail is constantly required, and the unceasing labours of the hydrographer are as necessary at the present time as they were in the past, for the steady increase in the size of vessels calls for greater detail and accuracy in order that they, with their greater number of passengers and enhanced value of hull and cargo, may be safety navigated. Although the fields for exploration both on land and sea are diminishing every day, the desire to explore the unknown is as strong as ever, and this is exemplified by the recent attempt to ascend Mount Everest, and the constant attempt, in the further exploration of the unknown lands of both the polar regions ; in regard to the South Polar regions it is worthy of mention that the exploration work carried out at such terrible cost of life and material in these seas has in recent years been repaid to some extent, if such losses can be repaid, by the extraordinary extension of the whaling industry therein with most satisfactory financial results.

" It was not until the beginning of the XIXth century that hydrography began to be organised on a definite basis and that continuity in hydrographic work was generally introduced by the greater maritime nations ; up to this time the making of charts had chiefly consisted of the exploration of those localities where material in some shape or form existed, but for the last hundred years it may be said that, although hydrographic exploration has invariably accompanied extension in commercial matters, it has also explored many regions in advance of the immediate necessities of commerce.

" As is the case with many allied sciences, it is impossible to give any exact limitations to their activities, and Hydrography and Geography are no exceptions. As has already been pointed out, one science is a necessary accompaniment of the other, and while it is often desirable that the geographer in his labours should have at least some knowledge of hydrography, to the hydrographer it is absolutely essential that he should possess a fair knowledge of the geography of the locality where he is employed. The hydrographer's work is associated closely with that of the land engineer and in many cases the accuracy of a hydrographical survey depends primarily on the accuracy of the work on land which has first to be undertaken.

" One considerable difference between these two sciences must be alluded to and that is, whereas some knowledge of geography is generally possessed

by the ordinary person of the present day, any knowledge whatever of hydrography is rarely to be found amongst the general public."

Admiral PARRY paid visits to various Government Departments, perhaps the most interesting of which was the Department of the Survey of Egypt, to which several visits were made; it is not only a most admirably managed institution, but is of exceeding interest and covers the widest possible field of works directly and indirectly connected with surveying; of its many important branches, the Desert Survey gives a wonderful impression of accurate work which is carried out under most difficult conditions; the centralisation of every description of survey work, records, *etc.*, must in the future prove of immense value in the progress of the country.

A very useful handbook, containing maps of the locality and detailed information concerning the Congress and its work, and useful historical data generally was distributed to the attending delegates and members on their arrival; a considerable number of other publications were also presented and, in connection with the geography of Egypt, special mention must be made of three volumes of the "*History of the Nile*" by H. H. Prince OMAR TOUSSOUN OF EGYPT, and of two volumes respecting the "*Discovery of Africa in the Middle Ages - Cartographers & Explorers*" compiled by Mon. DE LA RONCIÈRE, the well known historian of the "*Marine Française*", King FOUAD having given the commission for the execution of this valuable work; these two volumes contained a considerable number of excellent reproductions of mediæval maps as well as several beautifully coloured plates.

The first volume of the Official Report of the Congrès International de Géographie has now been received; this volume contains (*a*) the preliminary correspondence in connection with the adhesion of Egypt to the International Research Council and the Union Géographique International; (*b*) the organisation of the Congress, with lists of delegates, members, *etc.*; (*c*) an account of the reception of delegates and members in Alexandria on their arrival in Egypt, and (*d*) a description of the work carried out in Cairo, together with an account of the official receptions, *etc.* It is presumed that further volumes will contain the full text of all the papers referred to on pages 83 to 90 of this report.

The President of the Congress was General G. C. VACCHELLI, (Italy), (also President of the Union Géographique Internationale); the two Vice-Presidents elected by the Congress were: H. E. ADLY YEGHEN PACHA, (President of the Committee of Organisation), and Vice-Admiral Sir John PARRY, Adolphe CATTAUI BEY, the Secretary-General of the Royal Egyptian Geographical Society, acted as Secretary-General of the Committee of Organisation and carried out this task with most conspicuous energy, ability and success, and it is with the deepest regret that news has since been received of his death on 11th June last.

The hospitality shown to the delegates and members was very great, and most complete arrangements were made for visits to all places of interest in Cairo and its vicinity during the progress of the Congress, also for visiting more distant scenes after the termination of the Congress. His Majesty King FOUAD honoured the Congress with his presence at the opening session at the

Opera House, receiving all the delegates and members at the Royal Palace on the evening of that day ; His Majesty also gave a most enjoyable tea-party at the Pyramids at Giza.

VI. — Legal status of the Bureau.

Ever since the establishment of the Bureau the Directing Committee has been in communication with the Government of Monaco and the League of Nations with reference to its legal status in the State in which it is established. The omission of all mention of this subject from the Statutes drawn up in the year 1923 was due to the difficulty which was experienced in finding a solution acceptable to all concerned. After a considerable time the Government of Monaco came to the conclusion that it could not place an association of Sovereign States under local law, but it proposed to give to the Statutes of the Bureau, which emanated from the Sovereignty of the States Members, legal force within the Principality, and this has now been carried out. The position of the Bureau in this respect is therefore now satisfactory and, after reference to the States Members for their approval, Circular Letter N° 6-R, dated 17th August, 1925, announced that the necessary additions to the Statutes of the Bureau had been made.

VII. — Honours.

Rear Admiral J. M. PHAFF, of the Royal Netherlands Navy, one of the Directors of this Bureau, has received a gold medal from his Government in reward for the eminent services which he has rendered to navigation ; this medal is issued in commemoration of the Tercenteuary of the renowned Admiral DE RUYTER.

J. F. P.