been elected vice-president for 1919, automatically becoming president in 1920.

AT the meeting of the Washington Academy of Sciences on January 30, Major F. R. Moulton gave an address on the "Deviation of the stars."

DR. GREGORY P. BAXTER, professor of chemistry at Harvard University, is giving at the Lowell Institute, Boston, a series of lectures on "Chemistry in the war."

WILLIAM ERSKINE KELLICOTT, professor of biology at the College of the City of New York, died on January 29, at the age of forty years.

DR. BROWN AYRES, since 1904 president of the University of Tennessee and previously professor of physics and dean of the School of Technology of Tulane University, died on January 28, aged sixty-two years.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS

A SCHOOL for social research in New York City has been organized to meet the needs of those interested in social, political, economic and educational problems. The school will open with a full program in October, 1919. In the meantime, lectures will be given from February 10 to May 3 by Professor Thorstein Veblin, James Harvey Robinson, Charles A. Beard and others.

DR. W. R. BLOOR, formerly assistant professor of biological chemistry at the Harvard Medical School, Boston, Mass., has been appointed professor of biochemistry and head of the division of biochemistry and pharmacology at the University of California.

MR. C. S. MCKELLOGG, corporal in the Chemical Warfare Service, stationed at the American University, has been furloughed to the University of Mississippi as assistant professor of chemistry, where he is to have charge of the work in organic and physiological chemistry.

DR. LÉON FRÉDERICQ, who was professor of physiology at Liége and later at Ghent, was imprisoned by the Germans because he refused to continue his courses in Flemish after the Germans had taken the city and were trying to remodel the university to be a Flemish institution. The government of Belgium has now appointed Professor Frédericq lord rector of the university.

DR. JULES DUESBERG, will sever his connections as a member of the faculty of the Johns Hopkins University and will sail for Belgium on February 12. Dr. Duesberg went to Baltimore in 1915. He is is a native of Liége and in 1911 was made professor of anatomy at Liége University, where he will now resume his work.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

ON MONKEYS TRAINED TO PICK COCO NUTS

READERS of the Sunday editions of some of our metropolitan papers may recall that in the fall, the season of cotton picking in the South, waggish space writers sometimes make the suggestion that monkeys be trained to do this work and that thereby the shortage of labor be relieved.

In this connection there have come under my notice during the past year accounts showing that in a far distant part of the world monkeys are trained to do service which, for want of a better descriptive title, may be called manual labor. The first of these is from the well-known woman traveller, Isabella Bird. In her interesting book "The Golden Chersonese and the Way Thither" (1883) she writes on page 425:

> A follower had brought a "baboon," an ape or monkey trained to gather coconuts, a hideous beast on very long legs when on all fours, but capable of walking erect. They called him a "dog-faced baboon," but I think that they were wrong. . . . He is fierce, but likes or at all events obeys his owner, who held him with a rope fifty feet long. At present he is only half tame, and would go back to the jungle if liberated. He was sent up a coconut tree which was heavily loaded with nuts in various stages of ripeness and unripeness, going up in surly fashion, looking around at intervals and shaking his chain angrily. When he got to the top he shook the fronds and stalks, but no nuts fell, and he chose

a ripe one, and twisted it round and round till its tenacious fibers gave way, and then threw it down and began to descend, thinking he had done enough, but on being spoken to he went to work again with great vigor, picking out all the ripe nuts on the tree, twisted them all off, and then came down in a thoroughly bad, sulky temper. He was walking erect, and it seemed discourteous not to go and thank him for all his hard toil.

More to the point is the account given by Robert W. C. Shelford in his book "A Naturalist in Borneo" (London, 1916). This book is packed with interesting natural history data on a great variety of subjects gathered while he was curator of the museum founded by the great Rajah Brooke at Sarawak. On page 8, Shelford says:

Macacus nemestrinus, the pig-tailed Macaque or *Brok* of the Malays, is a highly intelligent animal, and the Malays train them to pick coconuts. The *modus operandi* is as follows: A cord is fastened round the monkey's waist, and it is led to the coconut palm which it rapidly climbs. It then lays hold of a nut, and if the owner judges the fruit to be ripe for plucking he shouts to the monkey, which then twists the nut round and round till the stalk is broken and lets it fall to the ground. If the monkey catches hold of an unripe fruit, the owner tugs the cord and the monkey tries another. I have seen a *Brok* act as a very efficient fruit-picker, although the use of the cord was dispensed with altogether, the monkey being guided by the tones and inflections of his master's voice.

E. W. GUDGER

GREENSBORO, N. C.

HAY-FEVER AND A NATIONAL FLOWER

The Independent recently conducted what might be called a popular voting contest in order to ascertain the favorite candidate for a national flower. The result is published in the issue of that magazine for October 26, 1918, and can be summed up in the introductory words of the article:

We supposed that it would be merely a choice between the two leading candidates, the goldenrod and the columbine, but to our surprise three other flowers ran neck and neck with them: the sunflower, the clover and the daisy, while there were besides a dozen also-rans. The candidates were so numerous and the votes so scattering that we must declare the election void.

In the same article, in commenting on the goldenrod, they say:

The hay-fever vote is something that every floral politician must consider, for it is undeniably influential. Still, the advocates of the goldenrod do not propose to toady to any such selfish interests.

The writer sincerely hopes this is not an expression of the general opinion concerning the sufferers from the malady misnamed hay-fever. Stories of the victims of this disease too often get into the funny papers in the same column with mother-in-law jokes—they both deserve to receive more consideration at the hands of the public at large.

Hollopeter[1] states that hay-fever is largely due to the action of the pollen of the ragweed and of the goldenrod, the former being eight-five per cent. guilty while the latter is responsible for the remaining fifteen per cent., not taking account of some few cases probably caused by the pollen of other plants. This seems to reduce the harm done by the goldenrod to a small amount, but it must be remembered that almost all cases are irritated by the pollen of this plant whether or not it is the specific cause of the attack.

Between one and two per cent. of our adult population probably either has hay-fever or is liable to contract it if the proper conditions arise. The efficiency of the victims is reduced during the attack a great deal, in some cases even causing them to be confined to their homes for a month or six weeks every fall. It is true that on this point there is great variation, but all victims have a lowered vitality. Such a loss of time and efficiency is not only a detriment to the individual but is also a loss to the community. Why should we aid in the preservation and spread of a plant of such propensities, even if it is good to look upon? Rather it should be classed with the ragweed, and every effort should be made to stamp it out, at least in the neighborhoods of our cities.

[1] Hollopeter, W. C., "Hay-fever, Its Prevention and Cure," New York, 1916.