THE will of the late Elmer A. Sperry, the distinguished engineer, who died in Brooklyn last month, creates a trust fund of $1,000,000, the income from which is to go to the Young Men's Christian Association. Half the income will go toward the seventy-fifth anniversary drive of the Brooklyn and Queens Y. M. C. A. for ten years, and the other half will be applied on the building fund of the Flatbush Y. M. C. A. After ten years the income will be used in any way that the national board of the organization may designate, although Mr. Sperry included in his will a wish that special preference always be given to the Flatbush branch.

THE British Minister of Health, Mr. Arthur Greenwood, after consultation with the London County Council and the senate of the University of London, has appointed a Provisional Organization Committee to proceed with the action necessary to secure the establishment of the British Postgraduate Hospital and Medical School. The terms of reference of the committee are to consider and report, in pursuance of the statement made by the Minister of Health in the House of Commons on April 9, upon (1) the action requisite to lead up to the planning and construction of the Medical School and (2) the form of government appropriate to the Hospital and Medical School, with special reference to the position of the London County Council as the local authority responsible for the hospital, and to the position of the University of London in relation to the school. The chairman of the committee is the Rt. Hon. Viscount Chelmsford. The Ministry of Health will be represented by Sir George Newman, chief medical officer, and Mr. M. Heseltine, assistant secretary. The London County Council will be represented by Miss F. Barrie Lambert, Sir William Ray, Mr. Angus N. Scott and Mr. L. Silkin. The University of London will be represented by the Rev. J. Scott Lidgett, the vice-chancellor elect; Mr. Sidney L. Loney, the chairman of convocation and deputy chairman of the court; Mr. H. L. Eason, superintendent and senior ophthalmic surgeon, Guy's Hospital, and Dr. Edwin Deller, principal.

DISCUSSION

THE MAGNETIC POLES OF THE EARTH AND THE BIRTH OF THE MOON

GEOPHYSICISTS recognize many structural asymmetries of the earth, such as the existence of continents of land and an elliptical figure of an equatorial sea-level section. The inequality of the two axes of this ellipse is of the order of one kilometer, the major axis terminating in central Africa and in Hawaii, the minor axis in Sumatra and the Andes.[1]

A remarkable asymmetry exists in the longitude of the earth's magnetic poles, which are at present in 96° west and 155° east longitudes. They are, therefore, only 109° apart, and their longitudes mark out roughly the average boundaries of the Pacific Ocean, the vast basin of which has many "deeps" and is enclosed by a giant circlet of extinct and active volcanoes. If this basin is the birthplace of the moon, it does not seem unreasonable to expect that enough of the heavier, deep-lying magnetic elements in the earth may have been torn along, placenta-wise, on that natal occasion to actually fix the magnetic poles of the earth in these regions. Perhaps it would be better to say that when the lunar material departed, a shift in the distribution of magnetic materials within the remaining mass took place toward the Pacific basin.

While it seems difficult to believe that the readjustment of the earth to approximately spherical form after such an enormous loss could leave anything fixed, other asymmetric vestiges of diastrophic changes in the earth during its long history have survived so that the one discussed here may not be ruled out *a priori*.

Attention may have been called to this bit of circumstantial evidence that the moon was born of the earth, but I have not found any mention of it in a casual perusal of several recent books on geology and geophysics.

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[1] See Jeffreys, "The Earth," p. 222.

EFFECT OF WATER ON TRIBOELECTRIC LUMINESCENCE WITH MERCURY IN GLASS

THOSE who have investigated the phenomenon of the faint flashing to be observed when mercury moves over a glass surface in a vessel containing gas at low pressure seem to have concluded quite unanimously that the presence of water destroys the effect.

The authors have determined that this statement is subject to a certain limitation. For Pyrex glass, at any event, and presumably for other glasses, the presence of water vapor makes no difference unless saturation is approached.

The observations resulted from watching the operation of a Töpler pump in a darkened room. In the absence of water vapor, the fall of mercury in the pump was accompanied by periodic flashing during the entire time of the down-stroke. When, however, water vapor at about half saturation pressure was admitted, the up-stroke of the pump resulted in