

OBITUARY

GOTTHELF CARL HUBER

THE passing of Christmas Day, 1934, saw also the passing of Gotthelf Carl Huber, M.D., D.Sc., professor of anatomy in the University of Michigan, director of the anatomical laboratory and dean of the Graduate School. He had been ill for several months, but characteristically carried the full burden of his duties up to within a few days of his death.

Dr. Huber was the son of a Swiss missionary and was born at Hoobly, India, on August 30, 1865. His parents soon removed to the United States and eventually settled at Batavia, N. Y., the boy receiving his early training in American schools. Electing to study medicine, he entered the University of Michigan at a time when Dean Vaughan was building up a new and progressive faculty. It was a constructive period and so appealed to Huber, ever ready to help on any movement, provided it were constructive. So, after graduation in 1887 he began his long term of nearly fifty years of service with the university as assistant in histology under Dr. W. H. Howell, there being at that time no place for either histology or embryology in the department of anatomy. Howell was then carrying on his studies of nerve regeneration and Huber assisted him in this work as well as in the routine classes, learning histological technique, of which he later became such a consummate master. In the succeeding years he found opportunity to visit Berlin (1890, 1891) and Prague (1895), gaining further experience in histological technique.

When Howell resigned in 1892 to accept the chair of physiology at Harvard the courses in histology and embryology fell entirely into Huber's hands and he was appointed assistant professor of these subjects and passed in due course through the grades leading to the full professorship, presiding, with success, over the courses in these subjects for forty-seven years, interrupted only by a year's leave of absence which was spent at the Wistar Institute of Anatomy in a thorough study of the embryology of the white rat. In 1914 he was appointed professor of anatomy and director of the anatomical laboratory, the courses in histology and embryology still belonging to his jurisdiction and thus recognized as parts of the anatomical discipline. In 1928 there was added to his other duties the responsible and influential deanship of the Graduate School and to this he gave freely of his time and experience.

Huber was an indefatigable worker, and even when overburdened with collegiate duties found time to carry out some valuable pieces of investigation. He mastered the more or less elusive methylene blue technique and used it in a study of nerve endings and

muscle spindles and he wrote a useful review of our knowledge of the sympathetic system, unraveling its complexities and establishing a new *status a quo*. He then turned his attention to the development of the urinary tubule, upon which subject one is tempted to say that he has written the last word. Of briefer articles mention may be made of that on the fate of the anterior end of the notochord, of that on the blood-vessels of the kidney and of that on the seminiferous tubule, all of which are contributions to our knowledge. During the Great War Huber served as contract surgeon and returned for a time to the study of nerve regeneration and in recent years he has been preparing, with his impeccable technique, series of sections for a thorough comparative study of the vertebrate brain, some results of which have already appeared and others are in press. Huber also edited a translation of the "Textbook of Histology" by Böhm and Davidoff, producing a book especially useful on account of its technical advice.

Huber was a member of many scientific societies, chief among which was the American Association of Anatomists, of which he was secretary from 1902 to 1913, passing then to the presidency (1914-1915). Closely related to this service was his interest in the *American Journal of Anatomy*, of which he was a co-editor from 1901 to 1920 and especially in the *Anatomical Record*, of which he was managing editor from 1909 to 1920. Of other societies of which he was a member mention may be made of the American Physiological Society, the American Association of Pathologists and Bacteriologists, the Society of Experimental Biology and Medicine, the Harvey Society, the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia and of the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences, these testifying sufficiently to the breadth of his interests and to a wide recognition of his worth. When the Advisory Board of the Wistar Institute of Anatomy and Biology was established Huber was chosen as a member and year after year was an attendant at its annual meetings. He was also an original member of the responsible Medical Fellowship Board of the National Research Council and had been chairman of the board since 1927. Northwestern University in 1930 granted him the degree of D.Sc. honoris causa, and his colleagues of the University of Michigan by appointing him to the Russell lectureship for the current year have testified to his service in maintaining and improving the academic standing of the university.

Not the least of Huber's contacts was his membership in the Alumni Association of his alma mater. He was closely associated with the organization of the

association in 1898 and from that date onward served continuously on its board of directors.

Huber was a genial soul; he enjoyed meeting old friends and making new ones at the Christmas and Easter meetings, and to his friends his outstanding character seemed to be kind-heartedness; he was ever ready with help in trouble or distress. On the academic side the motive force was work; he early discovered for himself that that was the master word.

J. PLAYFAIR McMURRICH

RECENT DEATHS

DR. MICHAEL IDVORSKY PUPIN, emeritus professor of electromechanics at Columbia University, died on March 12 in his seventy-seventh year.

DR. WILLIAM DUANE, emeritus professor of bio-

physics at Harvard University, died on March 7 at the age of sixty-three years.

DR. FRANKLIN H. MARTIN, director general and founder of the American College of Surgeons in Chicago, died on March 7. He was seventy-seven years of age.

CHARLES DENISON HOLMES, the inventor, who recently received thanks from President Roosevelt on behalf of the government for his work on marine internal combustion engines during the war, died on February 28.

PROFESSOR J. MACMILLAN BROWN, chancellor of the University of New Zealand, professor of English literature and an authority on ethnology, died on January 18 at the age of eighty-nine years.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

ETHNOGRAPHICAL FILMS

Nature reports that the trustees of the British Museum have accepted the donation of a cinematograph film of the life of the Worora tribe of the Kimberley district of northwest Australia. The film was presented by H. R. Balfour, of Melbourne. It was taken on the Government Native Reserve of Kunmunya, and shows the present conditions of native life. Technological processes, such as the making of stone axes and spear heads, in which these people are specially skilled, the making of fire by twirling one stick on another, the spinning of human hair for thread and the like are shown as living crafts. The "shots" also include ceremonies and dances and an emu corroboree. The film has already been shown to missionaries, learned societies and medical students in Australia; but, as is explained by Sir George Hill in a letter to the *London Times* of February 7, owing to the fact that it was taken on a government reserve, under the regulations of the Commonwealth Government, it can not be shown commercially. With the permission of the trustees of the museum, arrangements have been made for the film to be shown at a meeting of the Royal Anthropological Institute to be held on March 19 at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. A description of the film has been supplied by the Rev. J. R. B. Love, who is superintendent of the reserve and is well acquainted with the language of the Worora.

It is further stated in *Nature* that the possibility of forming such a collection or repository was one of a number of points connected with the making, selection and preservation of cinematograph films of anthropological and ethnographical interest, which was referred to a special committee appointed by the recent International Congress of Anthropological Sciences held in London in August last. The com-

mittee is international in its composition, Great Britain being represented by Captain T. A. Joyce, of the British Museum. It is announced in the February issue of *Man* that the British Film Institute has established a Scientific Research Panel of its Advisory Council, of which Professor J. L. Myres will act as chairman, to collect information as to the extent to which the cinematograph has been used in scientific work, details of methods and difficulties in technique, and particulars of films of scientific interest which have not been put into circulation through the ordinary commercial channels. The panel will welcome information on any of these points; communications should be addressed to the Secretary, British Film Institute, 4 Great Russell Street, London, W. 1.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE BLUE HILL OBSERVATORY

A CELEBRATION of the fiftieth anniversary of the first regular observation made at the Blue Hill Meteorological Observatory, Harvard University, was held on February 1 by members and ex-members of the staff and guests from the Harvard College Observatory, the U. S. Weather Bureau and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

After an inspection of the building, the group met in the radio room on the top floor of the tower, where they heard the hourly automatic tone signal, the strength of which is noted at Mt. Washington and Seabrook Beach, N. H., and at West Hartford, Connecticut. A. E. Bent, in charge of the radio station at Blue Hill, then established contact with A. A. McKenzie, in charge of the station on Mt. Washington, and through him talked with Joseph B. Dodge, founder and manager of the Mt. Washington Observatory and observer at the Pinkham Notch station. Next, also through Mt. Washington, contact was