

tions in Europe generally improve, or that Vienna would not be able to take her place on equal terms with other countries without the advantage of a cost of production subsidized by foreign relief.

With regard to the actual physical condition of the people at the moment, especially of the children, in which the people who have so generously helped in America are naturally most interested, thanks to this increase in wages, which has kept the majority of the working class from coming on our hands for relief, we have been able, with our limited programme, to do what was necessary to save the lives of the children, so far, this winter.

In the middle-class, where rises in salary, and fixed incomes have not come anywhere near the increase in the cost of living, the suffering is very terrible, and increasing as the colder weather sets in; we are now in the grip of a snowstorm which makes life almost impossible for people who have not been able to buy either clothing or fuel, and whose food has been reduced to about a quarter of that needed to maintain their vitality. The professional classes here have few children, and have had hardly any since the war, so that the relief for young children, which is our main piece of work, does not very much help them.

We have, therefore, turned our attention very specially to them this winter, and are particularly increasing, as far as our funds will allow, the help for the young children between the ages of 14 and 18 who, even if given one meal a day by the American Relief Administration, and only a very few of them get this now that the numbers have been reduced, are really not able to keep body and soul together while they are training themselves to earn their living.

The students in the university are still getting some help from the World's Student Christian Federation, but this, unfortunately, is coming to an end, and it is terrible to think what will happen, if they are unable to continue it, as the position of the students is certainly worse than it has ever been.

We are specially turning our attention to the lower grade or trade colleges of a lower standing than the university, and which are not included in this student relief,—where a great many of the poorest of the professional classes are trying to get their boys and girls trained for work which will enable them to earn their living more quickly than they could if they had to take the whole university course. We are now helping nearly

500 in this way, providing a fortnightly ration of extra food, enough to give about a third of the minimum calory requirements for an adult, and are also dealing with the whole family, who are often found, after individual investigation, to be in the most pitiable plight. All these families have had a ration of clothing averaging from six to ten garments per person, towards which they pay a trifling sum, which covers overhead expenses, and other help has been given where it was felt that the family could be placed in an independent position.

The students selected for help have been generally those in their final year, as it is found that this is the time when they tend to break down from the strain of combining study and a job, in the attempt to earn their keep. We are hoping to double the number, but if only we could obtain the funds we ought to increase it to 2,000 or 3,000.

At present, the need for clothing is, perhaps, the most pressing general requirement. We do not, of course, need to raise funds for those in receipt of the best wages, even though they are in the difficulty I described in the beginning of my letter, but it must be remembered that the great majority are still only in receipt of wages that will barely provide the minimum food for a family, and have absolutely nothing to spend on clothing, and in the professional classes, this is universally the case. They are faced with losing their jobs because they have not got the clothes in which to stand, and the bitter weather now upon us is, of course, making the need tenfold more urgent.

People may feel that it is now too late to send clothing for this winter, but if you are able to make it known how great the need is, I hope you will not let people be discouraged by the idea that it may be too late, because people require clothes to wear in the summer, and particularly in the case of underclothing, we did not find last year, that the demand was greatly lessened at the end of the winter.

## SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

### MEXICAN ARCHEOLOGY<sup>1</sup>

At a meeting of the Royal Anthropological Institute on November 22, Mrs. Zelia Nuttall gave an account of recent archeological investigations in Mexico. As an introduction to her report, Mrs. Nuttall referred briefly to the fact

<sup>1</sup>From *Nature*.

that after a period of quiescence of some centuries the great volcano Popocatepetl had again become active in 1920, and that its activity still continued.

During the last decade evidence that great volcanic disturbances had taken place at long intervals has been forthcoming. Two distinct types of figurines have been found in conditions which indicate that the topography of the valley has been changed and its inhabitants destroyed by great catastrophes antedating the arrival of the Nahuas or Aztecs.

Of these figurines the first, provisionally distinguished as the sub-gravel type, was brought to Mrs. Nuttall's notice in 1920, when specimens were offered for sale by Indians, and she herself discovered an example *in situ* under a gravel bed at Atzacapotzalco. They were delicately fashioned of fine clay, with slender bodies, long faces, smooth-hanging hair, some wearing chaplets. All presented a worn and polished surface. In the Valley of Mexico the gravel beds extend under the lava flow at the base of the extinct volcano Ausco.

Under the lava bed, to which Dr. Tempest Anderson assigns an age of at least 20,000 years, Mrs. Nuttall in 1908, and afterwards Senor Gamio, head of the Department of Archaeology of Mexico, have discovered a second type of figurine, to which the name "sub-lava type" has been given. This type is characterised by turbans and caps, evidently of fine stuffs or fur, and decorated with circular ornaments of stone or shell. They indicate that the southern part of the valley was inhabited by a race totally distinct from that of the "sub-gravel type" and the Aztec. The distribution of the clay figurines is now under investigation. They have been traced as far as Guatemala.

Mrs. Nuttall also described the results of recent excavations at Teotihuacan, during which a small pyramid was opened up and reconstructed by Senor Gamio. A tunnel pierced at the height of 35 feet to the center of the pyramid revealed that it had been formed of mud filled with innumerable fragments of pottery vessels which had prevented the mud from cracking when it baked in the sun. A remarkable discovery was that of the remains of the

ancient pyramid temple with a wonderful sculptured frieze which had been partly destroyed and then concealed by another terraced pyramid temple built in front. The sculptured serpents' heads and the masks of the water-god Tlaloc are of a form hitherto unknown. Associated with them are sculptured shells, principally the conch shell and the pecten or pearl shell. Not only is it remarkable that sea-shells should be represented in sculpture in the heart of the continent, but the association of the water-god with the ocean is entirely new.

In the discussion which followed Mrs. Nuttall's paper, Mr. Maudslay expressed the hope that it might be possible before long, by the elaboration of a system of stratification, to date Mexican antiquities. As Mexico appeared to have been untouched by outside influence, the study of its antiquities afforded evidence of the highest value for the study of the development of the human mind acting by itself. Mr. T. A. Joyce emphasized the importance of the evidence relating to the figurines, and pointed out that the British Museum had acquired a figurine of similar technique from Ecuador. Professor Eliot Smith expressed the opinion that, contrary to what had been stated by Mr. Maudslay, Mexican antiquities showed clear evidence of influence from outside and in particular from Asia. Mrs. Nuttall's work showed that this culture must have crossed the Pacific.

#### THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF ENGLAND

THE council of the Royal Agricultural Society of England has, as reported in the *London Times*, unanimously adopted a report from the chemical committee of the society, which had been instructed "to consider in what way, in view of the altered circumstances, the scientific side of the society might be developed." The council afterwards appointed the following research committee to carry out the research proposals made by the chemical committee:

The Duke of Devonshire, Lord Bledisloe, Professor W. Somerville, D.Sc. (Oxford), Mr. Dampier Whetham, F.R.S. (Cambridge), Mr. Henry Overman, and Mr. John Evens, with Mr. Charles Adeane (chairman of the finance