THE twenty-second Flemish Medical Congress was held at Antwerp on August 11 and 12. The following papers were read: The physiology of the heart, by Professor H. Zwaardemaker, of Utrecht; extracardial influences on the heart, by Professor E. de Somer and Dr. P. Maeyer of Ghent; intracardiac arrhythmia, by Dr. S. de Boer of Amsterdam; pharmacodynamics and clinical administration of cardiac drugs, by Dr. U. G. Bijlsma and Dr. M. J. Roessingh of Utrecht; radiology of the heart, by Dr. M. Peremans of Antwerp; heart disease in pediatrics, by Dr. J. Lebeer of Antwerp.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NOTES

FORTY-FIVE square blocks of Berkeley's most beautiful homes on the campus of the University of California up the hill slopes, north and east, were devastated by the fire on September 17, which is said to be the worst experienced by any California city since the San Francisco disaster of 1906. The fire was one of a series of forest, brush and grass fires, fanned by strong north winds and fed by undergrowth baked to a tinder by the prolonged summer. Such fires raged in nearly every county in Northern California. The buildings of the university were not harmed though it seemed at one time as if they would be destroyed. The homes of more than half the faculty and seven fraternity and sorority houses were burned. A shift in the wind then turned the course of the flames back over the burned area and many threatened buildings were saved.

AT the University of Buffalo instruction in the sciences fundamental to dentistry will be given hereafter in the departments of anatomy, biochemistry, pathology, pharmacology and physiology of the School of Medicine. To care for these increased responsibilities in the department of anatomy, of which Professor Wayne J. Atwell is the head, the following additions to the staff have been made: Dr. Rufus R. Humphrey, formerly of Cornell University, associate; Walter F. Greene, of Yale University, associate, and Ernest B. Hanan, of the University of Missouri, instructor.

THE work of preparing future executives for the oil industry will be undertaken by New York University. The course will be under the direction of Professor Ernest R. Lilley and credits toward a university degree will be given.

PROFESSOR Z. P. METCALF, head of the department of entomology and zoology of the North Carolina State College, has been appointed director of instructional work in the school of agriculture.

WILLIAM A. NEWTON, B.S. (McGill), Ph.D. (California), has been appointed assistant professor of botany at Pomona College. George M. Turner, specialist in petroleum, will be next year visiting professor of chemistry.

ARTHUR LL. HUGHES, research professor of physics in Queen's University, Kingston, Canada, has been elected Wayman Crow professor of physics at Washington University, St. Louis, to succeed Professor Arthur H. Compton, who goes to the University of Chicago.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

THE NEEDS OF GERMAN SCIENTIFIC MEN

IN connection with certain scientific work, it was incumbent on me to make a special trip to Germany this summer to confer personally with one of the most eminent and renowned scientists of that land, who was professor of physiology in a famous German university. I had never been to Germany before and had never had the privilege of meeting the distinguished man whom I was on my way to see. Indeed, we had little in common, because our primary interests were in different realms of science. As soon as he heard of my arrival in the little university town where he lived, he invited me and my son (who accompanied me on my journey) to have afternoon tea at his home, whither we repaired at the appointed hour. It was a charming old house which spoke everywhere of refinement and culture and comfort. The professor and his wife met us at the threshold and bade us welcome in the most hospitable manner. On the table at which we sat down there was a little black bread and one or two unappetizing dishes. My host apologized for the meagre repast, saying simply that nowadays they were reduced to great extremities for food. His wife added that they had had no butter or milk or eggs for months, but occasionally they contrived to get a little meat, usually horseflesh, and sometimes a bit of coarse fish. I asked many questions about the domestic situation, but they were reluctant to talk about it. A girl named Marta waited on the table. She had lived with them twenty-five years or more, and each week she came to her mistress and implored her to reduce her wages, although they were not enough to buy a postage stamp. Madame took me aside after tea and cautioned me not to converse with her husband about the present distracted state of affairs. Every penny they had saved in a lifetime was gone; they owned the house in which they lived, but could not afford to keep it in ordinary repair. Her husband could not bear to talk about the desperate situation. His only relief from day to day was to try to bury himself in his work and shut out the ever-present fear of impending disaster as

much as possible. Even this slender resource was not available except in a limited way, because he lacked the apparatus and facilities for carrying on his researches and was almost entirely without recent books and current periodical literature.

The professor conducted me to his study, and there we talked about the special matters connected with my mission. With as much tact as possible, I ventured to express some sympathy with him on account of the conditions under which he and his colleagues had to labor, and volunteered to send him a few books and scientific journals when I got home, at the same time suggesting that perhaps he might write me and advise me how I might be of service in other ways.

A few days ago I got a letter from him referring to various subjects about which we had conversed; one paragraph of it was devoted to the question of aiding German scholars, in compliance with my request. I think conditions have grown rapidly worse since the middle of July when I was in Germany; otherwise, I doubt whether the writer would have alluded to the subject at all. The following is a translation of this portion of the letter:

When you were here this summer, you intimated that among your friends in America there were perhaps some who might be glad to be of aid in some way to German science and its votaries. In this connection you asked me to advise you what was the best way to accomplish this. After mature consideration and consultation with several of my colleagues, I venture to write you as follows on this subject:

Concerning the general scientific situation and needs, such as repair of college, supply of literature, etc., the best method seems to be through the centralized bureau for this purpose established in Berlin (Notgemeinschaft deutscher Wissenschaft, Berlin C2, Schlossportal 3). If you wish to do something special, perhaps you should direct your attention to the domestic needs to which I have alluded already. While this situation affects all of us more or less, naturally it bears more heavily on some than on others. Thus, for example, here in our community a small society has been formed for several years, known as *Dozentenhilfe*, which is in charge of my colleague, Professor Blank, and which is intended to afford temporary relief in cases of extreme need, although it is very inadequate for the purpose. To keep this society going seems to me to be the most important thing to be done at present, because as things are now nobody can foresee what the next months have in store for us and whether far harder and more widespread ills are not impending over us than any we have heretofore learned to bear. With the sudden depreciation of our currency, it is hardly necessary to say that checks and drafts should not be made payable in German marks.

Obviously, for many reasons it would be better to send actual articles of value, especially such necessary things as are needful for a rational and desirable life; because our condition is rapidly nearing the typical starvation stage (*da unsere Zustände sich rapide der typischer Hungersnot nähern*). The number of those things which have disappeared entirely from the market and which are no longer to be had for any money is continually increasing. However, help of this kind is so complicated and difficult to compass that it can not be done effectively on any large scale, after the organization already created for that purpose has ceased to exist.

With warm greetings to you and your son, in which my wife joins, I am, etc.

As the writer did not authorize me to publish his letter, I have felt constrained to suppress the name of his colleague, Professor Blank, and also of the university where the "Dozentenhilfe" is established; but I shall gladly supply this information to any individual who will apply to me for it.

It does not seem necessary to add further comments, as the letter speaks for itself. Germany as a nation may, and doubtless will, recover; but for many individuals, who in some instances are among the most gifted and useful men and women of this time, there is no recovery. Their life and work is as good as ended.

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FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON THE SEX CHROMOSOMES OF MAMMALS

IN the following note the results of two studies dealing with the sex chromosomes of mammals will be given briefly.[1]

In insect spermatogenesis the sex chromosomes frequently persist during the growth period as densely staining chromatin-nucleoli. In mammalian spermatogenesis it has been generally assumed that the chromatin-nucleoli were of the same character, and a number of observers have sought to determine the type of sex chromosome from a study of these bodies. Very conflicting conclusions have been drawn from a study of the same material, however, and recently Gutherz has presented evidence to show that in the white mouse the chromatin-nucleolus forms an autosome.[2]

In the opossum the writer has followed the chromatin-nucleolus from the time of its first appearance until the telophase of the first maturation division. It forms the X-Y sex chromosomes of the opossum. During the growth period, however, the nucleolus is extremely labile in character and may assume a great variety of forms none of which give any hint as to the final shape which will be assumed in division. Unlike the insects, the X and Y elements of mammals

[1] These studies were carried on under a grant given by the Committee for Research on Sex Problems, National Research Council.

[2] Gutherz, 1923, *Arch. f. mikr. Anat.*