zoogeography, (2) Nomenclature and bibliography, (3) Morphology, physiology, embryology and genetics, (4) Oecology. *Applied entomology:* (1) Medical and veterinary-medical entomology, (2) Apiculture and sericulture, (3) Forest entomology, (4) Agricultural entomology—(*a*) Viticulture and pomiculture, (*b*) Agriculture and olericulture, (*c*) Stored products insects, (*d*) Means and methods for fighting vermin. The Secretary-General of the congress is Professor Dr. Hering, Zoologisches Museum der Universität, Invalidenstrasse 43, Berlin, N 4.

THE eighth annual meeting of the U. S. Institute for Textile Research, Inc., will be held at the Hotel Commodore, New York City, on November 4. In addition to the regular meeting of members in the morning for the presentation of annual reports and the election of directors, there will be an open research conference in the afternoon and a dinner in the evening. It is hoped that at the research conference representatives of other bodies engaged in textile research will report on progress and on future plans. There will also be an opportunity for members to suggest new subjects to the research council of the institute. At the dinner, in addition to the opening address of President Garvan, there will be given a report by Dean Joseph H. Willits and his associates on "Progress of the Survey of Production and Distribution Organization in the Textile Industries," and a report on "Cellulose Analyses," by Dr. Wanda K. Farr, director of research on the chemistry of cellulose at the Chemical Foundation, which is being conducted at the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research.

GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO has been named president of the Royal Academy at Rome to succeed the late Guglielmo Marconi. Marshal Pietro Badoglio, veteran of the Ethiopian campaign, has been made president of the National Council of Research, also succeeding Marconi. In accepting the appointment Sr. D'Annunzio sent the following message to Mussolini: "Great comrade, head of Italy's combatants, my chief: Knowing my aversion for holding office and having proved it in more peaceful times, you appoint me to-day president of the Italian Academy, as though to bring forth again fifty years of Latin culture and of pure devotion to my Latin fatherland. The new academy welcomes and gathers to it the flower of our genius and our scholarships, embellishing our *alma parens*. From those genii I learned to compose my human doctrine, from those scholars I learned the earliest beginnings and divined the future development of the nobility and richness of the language I speak and write. Thus designated by you, I enter this renowned laboratory whence the most brilliant work surges from the hardest of toil. So, comrade, I press to my faithful breast you, most Italian of heart, most unvanquished of destiny."

LORD NUFFIELD, the automobile manufacturer, has announced a gift of £300,000 to the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford, England. He previously had given £150,000 to the hospital. The second donation is in the form of an endowment fund, the income from which is to be devoted to raising the standard of the infirmary. Lord Nuffield's benefactions in the last eleven years amount to about £8,000,000, including a gift of £2,000,000 to the University of Oxford.

THE *Journal* of the American Medical Association states that plans formulated by the alumni council of Tufts Medical Association for the erection of a new medical school building at the New England Medical Center, Boston, have been approved by the trustees. A fund of $2,000,000 will be raised by public appeal among the alumni of the school and the people of New England, to be used for the building and endowment of various professorships and for the creation of a surgical unit at the Boston Dispensary.

A BASE hospital for Navajo and Hopi Indians, built at a cost of $450,000, is expected to be ready for occupancy by November 5 at Fort Defiance, Ariz. There will be private rooms, wards, isolation wards, a maternity unit and a nursery with facilities for fourteen patients. The Navajo-Hopi reservation of 25,000 square miles is the largest of 199 Indian reservations in twenty-two states. It has a total population of about 45,000 Navajos and 3,000 Hopis.

DISCUSSION

CAN WE ABANDON THE VITAMIN ALPHABET?

ONCE upon a time in the days of the Indians and Cartier life with the vitamins was simple. One drank pine needle tea or vitamin C extract to cure his scurvy (or his syphilis) according to Cartier. Then came Magendie with his dog experiments more than a hundred years ago, and vitamin A was born. More than a half century later Forster tried to feed his dogs on salt-free diets and produced typical symptoms of "B" deficiency. Finally the twentieth century arrived with the creation of the term "vitamin" and the use of a few letters to differentiate these essential factors.

The twentieth century is still young, but the average vitamin student is now afflicted with as many alphabetical vitamins as Job was with boils. Vitamin B

has turned to a full-sized swarm. Not only are there subscript numerals to the extent of six or more, but there are filtrate factors, X factors and even cousins of the B swarm that fly around in the world of bacteriology under such names as "Y."

Not alone can B claim the honor for hatching a full-sized swarm, but D is a close rival. The last news indicated that there were about eight D's, and finally, lest we forget, such infants as H and K. When last heard from there were three H's christened by three fond parents. Each of these discoverers seemed quite innocent of the labors of his fellow workers because so far as any one knows these H factors have nothing in common except a name. And in the spirit of true nationalism and in total innocence of the H brood one of the new German books upon vitamins has devoted a whole section to H, including its use in therapy, chemistry and physiology.

Thus far a considerable fraction of nutrition students have not shied at the specter of the vitamin alphabet, because they have worn blinkers to avoid seeing many vitamins beyond the popular ones and those in their own "frog pond." If you inquire about the vitamin requirements of bacteria in the ordinary nutrition laboratory you will probably get a questioning look because Knight's extensive bulletin on "Bacterial Nutrition" remains unknown. If you ask about the nutrition of planaria or insects you will probably be told that it is rather indecent for the nutrition specialist to consider the vitamin needs of such species. Thus far the rat remains the respectable species in the nutrition world, although the lowly chicken is starting to share this popularity. The pigeon, the dog, the guinea pig and the cow are worthy of a little consideration, while a nutrition worker would have to stoop pretty low if he touched a flea or an earthworm. Even an amateurish science built upon the rat and the chicken is going to become too complex before many more years if the nutritionist persists in retaining his vitamin alphabet. But when the nutrition student finally awakens to the need of including all life, both in the plant and animal world, in his science, even he will realize the present method of lettering vitamins must be dropped.

Therefore in the interests of building a broader science of nutrition, is it not better to abandon or at least to change the alphabet to a minor position? As a substitute I suggest a system of numbers to be issued by some such central agency as the League of Nations. When a new vitamin is to be postulated, the discoverer will need only to address a postcard to the central agency. Thus if a specific growth factor is discovered for moose by some nutrition student working in northern Ontario, he will only need address a request to the central agency. By return mail he will be assigned some number such as 1,572 and this will be recorded thenceforth. As specific properties of this number are developed, they also can be recorded and finally the chemical formula can follow the number. This will make it possible for the student of invertebrates to compare his findings with those of the bacteriologist and these in turn correlated with findings upon higher species. Thus a broader science of nutrition becomes possible with the removal of much of the present confusion.

Furthermore, a system of numbers partly solves the problem of the "lost vitamins." In the vast forest of modern literature are some vitamins wandering around under such titles as "Evidence that a third factor exists" or "Some evidence of the existence of a further factor necessary for growth of the rat." Usually the evidence for the existence of such vitamins is just as concrete as it is for "vitamin Q," but such discoveries are in danger of blooming unseen under the underbrush, while the perpetrator of "vitamin Q" finds his discovery listed in the indices of the abstract journals and discussed in the reviews.

Finally, it must always be recognized that the biologist working with animals is the one who will discover the new vitamins and establish techniques for their assay. This work must precede the isolation by the organic chemist. This order of work is inherent and means that there will be a growing accumulation of vitamins awaiting the attention of the chemist as the years pass and the biologist includes more species in his nutrition studies. After the chemist has done his work the biologist must inevitably return to the problems of comparative nutrition and the elimination of numbers that represent the same factor.

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LEGUMINAL AND AGROSTAL

WILL "leguminal" and "agrostal" serve for much needed words? Similar to the old Roman phrase, "horribili victu mirabili dictu," the polyglot language we speak is more or less a miraculous lingo in its misappropriation of terminology. When that great family Leguminosae, with its 600 genera and 1,200 species, steps out from behind the systematic botanists' corral and long before they reach the farm the common name is shortened to "legumes." The small cereals and the great are all grasses, and yet there remain those of the meadow, pasture, range, and those living by their autonomous efforts which are not cereals.

Major plant divisions all end in "phyta," ecological classes in "phytes" and the plant families with the suffix "aceae." We recognize cereal for grain grasses and ruderal for certain weed populations; would two additional words ending in "al" be permissible? The adoption of a new slang expression is accomplished