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**Columbia University
in the City of New York**

PRESIDENT'S ROOM

(Personal and confidential)

December 21, 1908

Professor Charles S. Sherrington

University of Liverpool

Liverpool, England

Sir:

At the close of the present academic year, —that is, on June 30, 1909 — John G. Curtis, M.D., LL.D., for thirty-two years Professor of Physiology in Columbia University, will retire from active service, at his own request. Under the Statutes of the University, the right to nominate his successor is vested in the Faculty of Medicine, and that Faculty has appointed a committee consisting of the President of the University, the Dean of the Medical Faculty (Dr. Samuel W. Lambert), the Professor of Anatomy (Dr. George S. Huntington), and the Professor of Materia Medica and Therapeutics (Dr. C. A. Herter), to consider the names of suitable persons who might be recommended for appointment as Professor of Physiology and to report to the Faculty at the earliest possible date.

At a meeting of this Committee, I was authorized and empowered to enter into correspondence with you in order to ascertain whether you would be disposed to view favorably an invitation to accept the Professorship of Physiology in Columbia University, and whether you would permit this Committee to present your name to

the Faculty for nomination to this post. Perhaps I do not go too far in saying that whomever this Committee may name to the Faculty will be nominated formally by the Faculty to the Trustees and confirmed as Professor of Physiology without delay.

The Professor of Physiology at Columbia is a member both of the Faculty of Medicine and of the Faculty of Pure Science. This means that he not only supervises and participates in the instruction of medical students in the science of physiology, but that he organizes and conducts the research work in physiology for such advanced students as resort to Columbia University for physiological study and inquiry of the higher kind. The stated duties of the Professor are of such a character that he has the amplest opportunity for his own personal studies and researches. He has in the Department as at present organized an Adjunct Professor of Physiology, four Demonstrators, a skilled mechanic and instrument maker, as well as a colleague, Professor Frederic S. Lee, who, while taking no part in the direction of the Department, has the title of Professor of Physiology and offers a limited amount of advanced laboratory instruction to students who are candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with physiology as their major or minor subject.

The salary of the Professorship is \$7,500 (something more than 1500 pounds sterling). The incumbent may retire or be retired upon a pension at the age of sixty-five, after fifteen years of service, or after twenty-five years of service regardless of his age, if he so desires or if the Trustees think best. Service in a

British institution of high rank would be counted at Columbia toward the period of service needed to qualify the professor for retirement under either of these provisions. Should the professor die either while in receipt of a retiring allowance or when entitled to one, his wife, should she survive him, would be entitled to receive one-half of the allowance paid to him so long as she might remain a widow. Moreover, the professor is entitled, in case of prolonged disability through illness or accident, to a disability allowance which is calculated usually in fixed proportion to the stated salary. I speak of these matters because they have a direct bearing upon the material aspects of the invitation.

Inasmuch as you have, I think, visited Columbia University and know something of its position, its men, and its history, I need only say that you would find here scientific colleagues of the first rank who would welcome you to their number with extreme cordiality and whose friendly cooperation and personal association would be, I am sure, both agreeable and stimulating. In Anatomy, Dr. Huntington; in Materia Medica and Therapeutics, Dr. Herter; in Bacteriology, Dr. Hiss; in Zoology, Professors Wilson, Morgan and Calkins; in Physics, Professors Pupin and Nichols; in Psychology, Professors Cattell, Thorndike and Woodworth; together with many others, would be your natural colleagues and associates. You will also be glad to know that in succession to Professor Prudden, who retires at the end of the year at his own request from the chair of Pathology, Professor MacCallum, of the Johns Hopkins University, has been appointed.

The spirit of research and of academic freedom fortunately dominates Columbia University and gives both character and direction to its policies and work. I venture to say that if you should see fit to become a member of our academic society, you would be able to carry on your scientific work uninterruptedly and under excellent conditions, and that you would find your surroundings agreeable in high degree.

I venture, therefore, on behalf of my colleagues upon the Committee, to press upon you with earnestness the favorable consideration of the proposal which I now have the honor to make.

In order that you may be as fully informed as possible concerning Columbia University, I am sending you in separate packages by this post, a copy of the official history of the University, a copy of the annual catalogue for the last year (that for the current year being yet in the press), a copy of the annual reports for the last year, and a copy of the Statutes governing the University. I am also sending an Announcement of the work of the Medical School, and regret that similar Announcements of the Departments and Divisions in the Faculty of Pure Science which are likely to be of most interest to you are at the moment out of print.

Hoping for an early, and I trust a favorable, reply,

I am, Sir,

Faithfully yours,



President of Columbia University