PRESENT STATE OF SOME GERMAN MUSEUMS

By FRANCIS J. GRIFFIN

Registrar, Royal Entomological Society of London

HAVING been granted special facilities to visit German museums during the last few months, it may interest readers of *Nature* to read my notes made from first-hand observation. The information is of necessity scrappy in view of the almost inconceivable chaos now existing in German transport and communications. One lasting impression remains with me: the certainty that it will be many years before anything approaching normal conditions returns to German museums. The destruction of buildings must be seen to be believed, and one may be excused for thinking that there is a good case for abandoning towns such as Cologne, Frankfurt, Stuttgart and others and building new towns on alternative sites.

By and large, scientific collections have emerged from the War with relatively little damage since for the most part they were evacuated in time. It has certainly been proved that such a policy was wise. Exhibition collections and teaching material, on the other hand, have usually suffered the fate of the museum or university building in which they were kept, while 'souvenir-hunting' has added to the losses.

Frankfurt on Main: Senckenberg Museum

The buildings are very seriously damaged, having been burned out and hit by high explosive bombs on several occasions.

The director is Dr. Rudolph Richter, who is at present (November 1945) interned in Bucharest, where he was on a visit when the Russians entered the town. Certain of the staff are still there.

The collections, apart from those on exhibition, were evacuated to more than forty different places and all but one of these escaped damage, the one being completely destroyed. The depot which is destroyed contained part of the collection of Mollusca, Aves, Palaeontology and Palaeobotany.

Each evacuation depot contained parts of several sections of the collection, it being considered that by this means no single section would suffer total loss in the event of damage being caused.

The Library was also evacuated and is reported to be safe.

Publication of the Senckenberg periodicals continued right throughout the War and a number of manuscripts are now in hand ready for publication. All that is lacking is permission to publish and a supply of paper. I brought back with me a set of the publications.

Frankfurt on Main: Zoological Gardens

The Zoological Gardens have suffered severely but part is now (November 1945) open to the public and there is a daily circus performance. The director is Dr. Bernhard Grzinek and the superintendent Herr G. Lederer (entomologist).

The Aquarium is completely destroyed and its contents lost. The small staff now available are all engaged in dealing with the tremendous difficulties with which they are faced.

The whole Library is destroyed, as also was part of Herr Lederer's private entomological collection, including "about 4 types of Geometridæ" of which I

was unable to learn the names. I visited the Gardens and saw two European bison (80 per cent pure), lions, elephants, a camel, hippopotamus, two chimpanzees, several bears, deer, wild boar, etc., and a number of parrots, eagles, vultures, hawks and owls. The collection is small and badly housed, for there is little or no glass available and most of the roofing is inadequate to provide protection against the weather. The surrounding ruins of the almost completely destroyed city of Frankfurt do not improve the picture.

I learned from Lederer that the entomologists G. Ochs and Prof. E. May were interned by the Nazis at Dachau but they are thought to be still alive.

Wiesbaden: Landesmuseum für Naturkunde

The building is little damaged and much of the collection is stored there still but is not available, as the building is under requisition by the Americans for use as a clearing house for the stolen works of art they have discovered. I was fortunate in being allowed to see some of the priceless contents of the building. This included (October 1945) an immense collection of church treasures stolen by the Germans from Poland (mainly the neighbourhood of Poznan), St. Stephen's crown from Hungary, the remainder of the Prussian State jewels and the old masters evacuated from the Berlin museums and galleries.

In passing, I would record the great difficulty being experienced by the American officer in charge, Capt. Farmer, in identifying many of the objects stolen by the Germans from Poland, for many are not recorded in print.

The Library of the Museum is intact and has apparently suffered no damage. It is in a certain state of disorder as the result of its removal to and from the cellar and, I imagine, the present lack of trained staff. It should not, however, come to any harm under present conditions.

Darmstadt

The town is as badly damaged as almost any in Germany, and was obviously completely burned out. I failed to find any scientific workers: for that matter there are extremely few people in the town at all. The Museum was destroyed but whether or not the contents had earlier been removed I was unable to learn.

Heidelberg

This was the first town I had seen in the course of much travelling in Germany that was completely undamaged with the exception of the river bridges.

I called at the Natural Science Department of the University, but only a single naturalist had returned and I omitted to note his name. I understand that what collections they had are undamaged, and the Geological Library, which I saw, is in perfect order. The University Library is occupied by an American service organisation and I was unable to visit the book stacks. The Heidelberg Academy of Sciences continued its publications throughout the War and I obtained a set which I brought to London.

Karlsruhe: Technische Hochschule

The buildings have been extensively damaged and are now (November 1945) an empty shell. I failed to find anyone but a caretaker, who could give me no information. Despite prolonged inquiry, I failed to locate the present whereabouts of the Geologisches Landesanstalt.

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The Museum building is totally destroyed and here also I failed to trace any person with exact information. I managed to seek out the publication store room and obtain a set of publications which I brought back to London. I could not discover whether or not the collections are now safe, but there is nothing in the Museum itself.

Stuttgart Museum

The building is burned out. The present director is Dr. M. Rauter, and Dr. E. Lindner and Dr. Götz (both entomologists) are still at the Museum, the latter having just (November 1945) returned from service.

The collections have suffered severely and the exhibit specimens and collection of invertebrates are completely lost, according to Dr. Rauter.

The most valuable part of the entomological collection was evacuated to a salt mine at Kochendorf, where it now (November 1945) is, and many other parts of the collections were deposited in various castles in the neighbourhood of Stuttgart. It is thought that no types have been lost.

Dr. Götz told me that no parts of the *Orthopterorum Catalogus* appeared during the War.

Herr Kernen, of Kernen-Verlag, who is a Swiss subject, is now in Switzerland, and Herr Cellarius acts as his agent. The stock of publications has been lost except for certain parts of Seitz, "Grossschmetterlinge der Erde", which appeared during the War, and these, while safe, are inaccessible. I understand that copies for British libraries have been put on one side and are safe.

I saw Herr Obermüller, of Schweitzerbart'sche Verlag, who told me that the firm had suffered little or no loss of stock and that publication had continued throughout the War. I collected a set of such publications as were immediately available and brought them to London, including a copy of Lindner's "Die Fliegen". Obermüller complained that he was unable to obtain a permit to publish from the Americans and sought to induce me to bring pressure to bear on them to permit him to start up again. I understand that he has a number of manuscripts awaiting publication.

Coblenz

This town is very heavily damaged and I was unable to locate any men of science or scientific institutions.

Mainz

This town is also very heavily damaged and I was again unable to locate any scientific workers or scientific institutions.

Dusseldorf

This town is also heavily damaged except for the suburb of Ober-Kassel. I was unable to find any scientific workers or scientific institutions.

Duisburg

Here again damage is heavy, but I found the Staatliche Kunst Museum building little damaged and (November 1945) in use for office purposes. Evidently the collection had been evacuated, but I could discover no details. The Niederrheinisches Museum, on the other hand, is completely wrecked. What was

evidently once a small compact building is now an empty shell open to the sky and with nothing but debris for its contents.

Köln

Cologne is a terrible sight—a ruined city!

The Zoological Gardens are very badly damaged but a small collection remains. The director is Dr. W. Zahn, who told me that Prof. Otto Kuhn was at present in the city (November 1945), but since he had been a member of the Nazi party he was no longer in office. Herr Ernst Schäfer, the Tibetan traveller, was an ardent Nazi and had joined the S.S., but Zahn had no news of his present whereabouts.

In the menagerie I saw a three-year-old hippopotamus (born in Amsterdam), two zebras, a reindeer, three antelopes, a camel, llama, wild horse, wild boar, Indian buffalo, water buffalo, porcupine and a yak, two dwarf Serbian asses and six wild sheep. All are kept in unsatisfactory conditions, without adequate food supplies.

Bonn

The Geologisch-Paleontologisches Institut building is undamaged. The present director (November 1945) is Prof. Hans Cloos, and the following staff are safe: Prof. J. Wanner, Prof. N. Tillman, Prof. E. Jaworski and Dr. W. Bierther. Dr. G. Knetsch is still a prisoner-of-war in Norway and I was told that Prof. C. Troll is alive and his large private library safe. Dr. W. Kleber is well, and Prof. K. H. Schaumann of Leipzig is going to Bonn to replace Prof. K. Chudoba, the former head of the Mineral Department, who has been removed from office as he was an ardent Nazi. Chudoba is said (October 1945) to be in prison in Elberfeld.

The geological collection is undamaged but the mineral collection is estimated to be 60 per cent destroyed.

The Zoologisches Institut building is completely destroyed. The present director, Prof. A. Reichen-sperger, told me that the entire collections are lost. He mentioned in particular the Winnertz collection of Diptera, including types, part of the Nees von Esenbeck collection of Hymenoptera, including types, the large Bruch collection of local Coleoptera, the bird collection, the mammal collection and all teaching material. In addition, some 10 per cent of Reichen-sperger's own collection of Myrmecophiles, including some types of Histeridae, are destroyed.

Dr. E. Schmidt, the entomologist, is alive, and I called at his house to find him out shopping—a major preoccupation of Germans to-day!

The Museum König (now Reichsmuseum König)—formerly a private collection—has been acquired by the State and the present director is Dr. von Jordans, an ornithologist. The building has been damaged, but not seriously, and the collections, including Hone's Chinese material, are safe.

The Landesmuseum is a burned-out shell.

Krefeld

The original premises of H. Goecke Verlag are much damaged and the proprietor, Herr Goecke, has entered into a partnership with a Dutch coleopterist named Evers. The stock of *Entomologischer Blätter* is largely destroyed, but I was able to obtain a set of the war-time issues, which I brought to London. Goecke's private library is safe. There is no museum in Krefeld so far as I could ascertain.

Berlin

Das Deutsches Zoologisches Museum (formerly Zoologisches Museum der Universität) is very heavily damaged. The present (November 1945) directors are Prof. H. Bischoff and Prof. H. Pohle, who were appointed by the Russians. The staff comprises, in addition, Prof. M. Hering, Prof. W. Rammme, Dr. H. Hedicke (Rhynchota), Herr N. I. Kardakoff (Lepidoptera), Dr. K. Delkeskamp (Invertebrates), Dr. M. Eisen-traut (Arachnida), Dr. Hahn (Vermes), Herr Grote (Aves) and Prof. E. Streseman (Aves). The former director, Prof. von Lengerken, was a Nazi and has been removed from office, although I understand he is still at work in the Agricultural High School. Dr. Stichel, the hemipterist, was responsible for giving away a number of his colleagues to the Nazis and was directly responsible for the beheading of Prof. Arndt (sponges) a year or two ago.

The Museum was declared an independent institute, free from the University, by the Russians in September 1945.

The following workers are stated to be alive (November 1945): Prof. Schellenberg (Crustacea), Herr Friese (entomology), Herr Bluthgen (entomology), Herr Hans Wagner (entomology), Prof. G. Enderlein (entomology). The following workers are, I understand, dead: Herr Alfken (entomologist), Herr Max Müller (entomologist), Herr Engel (dipterist), Herr Draudt (lepidopterist), Herr Urbahn (entomologist), Herr Hennig (entomologist), Prof. Pappenheim.

The collections are partially destroyed (estimated loss in entomology one fifth) but the main part is safe.

In addition to the museum collections, the well-known collection of leaf-miners owned by Prof. Hering has been completely destroyed but fortunately many of the bred insects are safe. Prof. Hering told me that the Staudinger Collection, including the Micro-lepidoptera, is safe.

The Museum Library was evacuated to Altlitz-on-Order, but, shortly before the Russian advance, Prof. Streseman managed, by using military transport, to return most of it to Berlin, where it now is. Only six cases with their contents are lost and these are known to have been burned. The Museum building is very seriously damaged and while some rooms are still in use, this is only because there is a complete lack of alternative accommodation in Berlin. So far as I can discover (November 1945), no scientific work is being carried on at the Museum; nor, under existing conditions, is it possible, but some specialists are continuing to work at home. In my view, there is serious danger of grave damage occurring to those parts of the collection and library now in the Museum building from the effects of the weather. Several inches of water were lying on the ground floor when I arrived (it had rained during the night) and there is practically no glass anywhere and almost no cardboard or other material available, and there are few doors in the building. Books and papers are blowing about in some of the rooms and the windows afford no protection from wind and weather. The whole efforts of the small staff now available are devoted, under the most trying conditions imaginable, with no heating and very small personal food rations, to preserving what is left of the contents of the Museum. The measure of their success remains to be seen.

Dr. Hedicke suffered great personal loss. His home and its contents were destroyed by a direct hit from a bomb. That part of his collection at his home at

that time was destroyed, but he had, as a precaution, stored some valuable parts of it elsewhere and unfortunately this suffered a like fate. I understand that no part of his collection, or any insects on loan to him, have been preserved.

The building of the Deutsches Entomologisches Institut in Gosslerstrasse is practically undamaged, but the contents are evacuated to Post Blucherhof, Mecklenburg, where they are believed to be safe and sound. The present director is Dr. H. Sachtleben, who is with the collection so far as I can discover. The building is at present (November 1945) occupied by an American military organisation.

Of the Berlin publishers, Friedländer und Sohn is at present owned by Dr. P. Budy. The old premises in Karlstrasse are completely destroyed and that part of the stock which is saved is said to be in Gotha. The firm is now known as 'Natura' Verlag.

The premises of Nicolaische Buchhandlung are a pile of rubble. I did not discover the present whereabouts, if any, of the firm.

The premises of Gebrüder Bornträger are burned out, but I found an alternative address which I visited to find no one in and only a small pile of books visible through the windows.

I understand that J. Springer is still in business at its old address, but I had not sufficient time to call.

The firm of W. de Gruyter is also still at its old address, but again I had no time to call.

Göttingen

The Geological and Palaeontological Department of the University is under the direction of Prof. E. Bederke, formerly of Breslau. He is assisted by Prof. Herman Schmidt and Dr. Kremp. Prof. W. Schriel and Dr. Thienhaus were both Nazis and neither is now allowed to work in the University. The former is in Göttingen and the latter somewhere in the country.

About two thirds of the building is unusable and the collection is much damaged. Prof. Bederke estimates the loss at about 20 per cent, and many original specimens (types) have been destroyed.

Both the building and collection of the Anatomical Department are completely destroyed.

The library of the Naturwissenschaftliches Institut was evacuated to a salt mine at Wolpriehausen and shared the mine with a munition dump. Unfortunately this blew up and several thousand works are believed to have been lost. The exact extent is unknown, for the mine is still sealed up.

The dean of the Natural Sciences and Mathematics Faculty of the University is now Prof. Eucken and the following are the staff: *Botany*: Prof. Harder (director), Prof. Steiner, Dr. von Witsch, Dr. von Denffer; the building and collections are all undamaged. *Zoology*: Prof. Henke (director) and Dr. von Holst; the building is a total loss, but the collection, which was partly in the cellar and partly evacuated, is undamaged.

The meteorologist, Prof. Angenheiter, died a few months ago, and Dr. von Engelhardt, the mineralogist, was an old member of the Nazi Party and is now a prisoner in Wuppertal.

The president of the Göttingen Akademie der Wissenschaften is Prof. Correns, with whom I spoke on the telephone and who promised me a set of the publications of the Academy. Unfortunately his assistant would not produce them for me and I left the next day without them.