promoting united work on problems of common interest. Borderland subjects merit special consideration from this point of view.

The publication of the proceedings of such meetings in the transactions of the several societies concerned would be much facilitated by the adoption of a uniform size and type for the publications of societies dealing with allied subjects, so that each could include such papers in its journal or distribute them as self-contained reprints of a standard size. Similar uniformity is perhaps not practicable for all scientific and technical publications, but in so far as it can be adopted it would add much to the accessibility and the utility of the recorded work.

Organized collaboration is also desirable by means of which the members of scientific and technical societies should have opportunity of knowing what papers are being contributed to societies other than their own, apart from their later publication either in the journal of the society concerned or in the form of abstracts. The proposal, which, it is understood, is being considered by the Board of Scientific Societies, to publish a weekly journal of announcements would meet this want, and it is to be hoped that the board will decide to issue such a publication as soon as possible. Meanwhile, individual societies could aid in this direction by publishing in their journals both the announcements of cognate societies and short summaries of papers read previous to publication, so that the subject-matter is brought to the notice of those interested at as early a date as possible. A method of mutual exchange to facilitate such cooperation could be easily arranged, and would in no way detract from, but rather add to, the interest in the later full publication of papers.

Apart from original contributions, the publications of most societies include abstracts of scientific and technical literature published both in our own and in foreign journals. In so far as such abstracts include subjects of common interest to members of kindred societies, there is at present a great deal of overlapping which could be advantageously eliminated by organized collaboration. We have, in the past, been far too reliant in many subjects on the foreign, and especially on the German, journals for our supply of the world's scientific and technical literature, and it is high time that we became independent and self-supporting in this respect. Effective cooperation should achieve this desirable end for each group of cognate subjects; and whilst the method of collaboration would depend to a considerable extent on the character of the subject, a common journal of abstracts for each group of societies would, in the majority of cases, prove the most advantageous plan. Although a scheme of this character would necessarily decrease the bulk of the publications of each society, the original contributions which mark their individuality would be given greater prominence, time wasted by the rereading of the same abstract in several journals would be saved, and considerable economies in publication would be effected.

Much attention is being directed at present towards the unification and coordination of scientific effort. The coordination of scientific publication, which has made some progress in the directions indicated during recent years, should certainly continue to occupy a prominent place amongst these problems of reconstruction.

VITAL STATISTICS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

THE Registrar-General has made public the following statement showing the birth-rates and death-rates and the rate of infantile mortality in England and Wales and in certain parts of the country during 1917.

ENGLAND AND WALES

Birth-rate, Death-rate and Infant Mortality during the Year 1917 (Provisional Figures)

	Birth-rate per 1,000 Population	Civilian Death-rate per 1,000 Civilian Population	Deaths Under One Year per 1,000 Births
England and Wales	17.7	14.4	97
96 great towns, including London (population exceeding 50,000 at the census of 1911)	18.0	14.6	104
148 smaller towns (populations from 20,000 to 50,000 at the census of 1911)	17.9	13.1	93
London	17.4	15.0	103

The following table, by the *British Medical Journal* compiled from the statements published for ten years, will be of interest. The figures (not standardized) of the death-rates do not disclose any very distinct movement; the deaths of infants appear to indicate a slight increase. The most disquieting set of figures are those showing a further marked decline in the birth-rate since 1914.

ENGLAND AND WALES

	Births per 1,000 Total Population	Deaths per 1,000	Deaths Under One Year per 1,000 Births
1908.....	26.5	14.7	121
1909.....	25.6	14.5	109
1910.....	24.8	13.4	106
1911.....	24.4	14.6	130
1912.....	23.8	13.3	95
1913.....	23.9	13.7	109
1914.....	23.6	13.9	105
1915.....	21.9	15.1	110
1916.....	21.6	14.0	91
1917.....	17.7	14.4	97

CIVIL ENGINEERS AND THE ARMY

The War Department states that two thousand engineers are needed immediately by the United States Army for commission as first lieutenants and captains. The chief of engineers has outlined a plan of campaign by which it is hoped to obtain the men needed without delay. A board of examiners will be sent out from Washington to visit about 33 principal cities.

Engineers, civil, mechanical, mining and electrical, will have an opportunity to go before the board and be examined. Those passing the examinations will be commissioned at once and sent to an engineer officers' training camp, either at Camp Lee, Petersburg, Va., or Camp Humphreys, Va., near Washington. They will be on officers' pay while training and at the completion of their courses will be assigned at once to duty with the engineer troops.

Engineering societies and institutes will be provided with application blanks to be distributed among their members and friends in the profession. Engineers who do not obtain blanks in this way should address the Chief of Engineers, United States Army, Washington. These forms, when properly filled out, should be returned to Washington. After they have been scrutinized with a view to ascertaining the fitness of the applicants, word will be sent out telling the men when and where to appear for mental and physical examinations.

Following are the requirements that must be met:

Age Limits.—First lieutenants, 32 to 36 years; captains, 36 to 42 years. These limits may be extended in special cases, but no man of draft age will be considered.

Citizenship.—All applicants must be citizens of the United States.

Qualifications.—Applicants must be actively engaged in the practise of the engineering profession, and be in good physical condition. No set rules have been adopted as to professional qualifications and experience. The examining board will determine each applicant's case. Applicants must possess the requisite qualities of leadership and temperament to fit them for the command of troops.

It is the hope of the chief of engineers to have all men who pass the examinations commissioned within ten days or two weeks. Traveling expenses of 7 cents a mile to the training camp will be allowed to those who receive commissions.

WAR WORK OF MINING ENGINEERS

Heads of practically every "war-work" division of the government will discuss vital war problems with 200 of the country's leading mining engineers, representing the American Institute of Mining Engineers, at a dinner in the Food Administration Cafeteria on the evening of June 21. To learn new ways in which the mining engineer can contribute his services, already great, toward the winning of the war is the aim of the gathering, which has been planned in honor of the board of directors of the institute. There are some 700 of the institute's membership of 6,700 devoting their entire time to war service.

Those who will discuss future work for the institute in the war are practically all members of the institute. They include Herbert