

result as final; some people had suggested that the shift might be veiled by a systematic outward movement of the photosphere, but as Dr. St. John made measures both at the sun's center and limbs, that suggestion was not tenable. Professor Eddington admitted that the failure threw doubt on the validity of some of the steps which led Einstein to his gravitational result; but he contended that the two other successes indicated that the result was right, even if reached by a wrong method.

There was some discussion on Professor Lindemann's method of photographing stars in daylight by the use of red screens. However, the eclipse method seems more trustworthy, and the Astronomer Royal expressed the hope that the eclipse of 1922 might be observed with equatorials. The star-field is not so rich as in the late eclipse, but with longer exposure much fainter stars could be recorded. The eclipse-track crosses the Maldiv Islands and Australia, and is therefore fairly accessible.

A. C. D. CROMMELIN

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

INVESTIGATIONS ON INFLUENZA

THE Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has provided resources to carry on investigations into the cause, mode of transmission and treatment of influenza and its complications.

A commission has been appointed consisting of Dr. G. W. McCoy, director of the hygienic laboratory, U. S. Public Health Service; Dr. W. H. Park, director of the research laboratory, New York City Department of Health; Dr. Lee K. Frankel, third vice-president of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company; Dr. A. S. Knight, medical director of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company; Dr. M. J. Rosenau, chairman, professor of preventive medicine and hygiene, Harvard Medical School. Later, Professor E. O. Jordan, of the University of Chicago, and Dr. W. H. Frost, of the U. S. Public Health Service, were invited to join in the work.

Work has already been begun in Washington, New York, Boston and Chicago and may be extended to other places as occasion arises. In this way correlation and cooperation are effected. The object of the commission is primarily to study the cause, mode of spread and treatment of influenza and its complications. Studies are now being made upon the prophylactic value of vaccines against influenza, common colds and pneumonia, properly controlled. Laboratory researches are being conducted to determine the cause of these infections, and a special study is being made of the bacterial flora of the upper respiratory tract in health and disease. Special consideration is being given to the possibility of a filterable virus being the cause of any of these infections. Cooperation and suggestions have been invited from health officers and others interested.

PROBLEMS OF FOOD AND NUTRITION

THE National Research Council has formed a special committee on Food and Nutrition Problems, composed of a group of the most eminent physiological chemists and nutrition experts of the country. The members are: Carl Alsberg, chief, bureau of chemistry, Department of Agriculture; H. P. Armsby, director of the institute of animal nutrition, Pennsylvania State College; Isabel Bevier, director of department of home economics, University of Illinois; E. B. Forbes, chief, department of nutrition, Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station; W. H. Jordan, director, N. Y. Agricultural Experiment Station; Graham Lusk, professor of physiology, Cornell University Medical College; C. F. Langworthy, chief of office of home economics, Department of Agriculture; E. V. McCollum, professor of biochemistry, School of Public Health and Hygiene, Johns Hopkins University; L. B. Mendel, professor of physiological chemistry, Yale University; J. R. Murlin, professor of physiology and director of the department of vital economics, University of Rochester; R. A. Pearson, president of the Iowa State Agricultural College; H. C. Sherman, professor of food chemistry, Columbia University; A. E. Taylor, Rush professor

of physiological chemistry, University of Pennsylvania; and A. F. Woods, botanist, president of Maryland State College of Agriculture.

This committee will devote its attention and activities to the solution of important problems connected with the nutritional values and most effective grouping and preparation of foods, both for human and animal use. Special attention will be given to national food conditions and to comprehensive problems involving the coordinated services of numerous investigators and laboratories. The committee, with the support of the council, is arranging to obtain funds for the support of its researches, and will get under way, just as soon as possible, certain specific investigations already formulated by individual committee members and sub-committees. These include studies of the comparative food values of meat and milk and of the conditions of production of these foods in the United States, together with the whole problem of animal nutrition; the food conditions in hospitals, asylums and similar institutions; the nutritional standards of infancy and adolescence; the formation of a national institute of nutrition; and other problems of similarly large and nationally important character.

THE ELIZABETH THOMPSON SCIENCE FUND

At a meeting of the trustees of the Elizabeth Thompson Science Fund, held on Thursday, November 20, the following grants were voted: two hundred and fifty dollars to Professor Duncan S. Johnson, of Johns Hopkins University, for studies on the Development, Persistence and Growth of the Cactaceæ and Certain Myrtaceæ; two hundred dollars to Professor Antonio Pensa, of the University of Sassari, Italy, for investigations on the Cytology of Vegetable Cells; and three hundred dollars to Professor Lawrence J. Henderson, of Harvard University, for a research on the Heats of Reaction of Oxygen and Carbon Dioxide with Hæmoglobin solutions.

The Elizabeth Thompson Science Fund has been serviceable for many years in giving aid, by small grants, to research which otherwise might not be readily undertaken. The grants

are made only for scientific investigations and must be applied to actual expenses of the research, *i. e.*, they are not made to support an investigator or to meet the ordinary expenses of publication. The trustees give preference to researches involving international cooperation. The grants are not made for researches of narrow or merely local interest, nor are they available for equipment of private laboratories or for purchase of apparatus ordinarily to be found in scientific institutions. Applications for grants from this fund should be made before January 15, 1920, to Professor W. B. Cannon, secretary of the trustees of the fund, Harvard Medical School, Boston, Mass.

ENDOWMENT OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL OF VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

ANNOUNCEMENT is made that the General Education Board of New York, has appropriated the sum of \$4,000,000 for the purpose of enabling the Vanderbilt University to effect an entire reorganization of its medical school, in accordance with the most exacting demands of modern medical education.

The faculty of the medical school has for some years been urging upon the trustees of the university the necessity of radical and thoroughgoing organization, and it is promised its hearty and unconditional cooperation in the establishing of a new school of medicine in Nashville, as an integral department of Vanderbilt University.

Detailed plans for the new school have not as yet been developed, but they will unquestionably involve the completion of the present Galloway Memorial Hospital, with enlarged faculties for public patients, the erection in the near future of an additional hospital unit, the organization of a modern laboratory building, and the appointment of an increased number of professors, giving their entire time to the school and hospital, in both laboratory and clinical branches. Thus, not only will the endowment of the medical school be very greatly increased, but it will start its career with a modern and up-to-date plant—laboratory as well as hospital.

It is stated that this contribution by the