

births, being one per thousand above the rate in the preceding year, but 10 per thousand below the average of the 10 years 1908-17. It is one of the four lowest rates hitherto recorded. The provisional figures for 1919 show a rate of 89 per thousand births, or two per thousand births below that of 1916, which at 91 per thousand was the lowest hitherto returned.

The estimate of the total civilian population for the whole of England and Wales is given as 13,777,100 civilian males and 19,697,600 females, making a total of 33,474,700 persons. The marriages during the year numbered 287,163, and the marriage rates of 51.9 for males and 41.0 for females represented a considerable advance on the low records of the previous year.

The births registered during 1918 numbered 662,661, or 5,685 fewer than in the previous year, during which 210,750 fewer births had been registered than in 1914, while the deaths of 611,861 were registered during the same period. Of the deaths, 314,704 were of males and 297,157 of females. The males included 24,033 non-civilians.

THE WORLD'S PRODUCTION OF GOLD

THE Geological Survey has given out some preliminary figures showing the promotion of gold throughout the world in 1919. The production in the United States was \$58,285,196; Canada is reported to have produced \$14,687,000; India \$10,028,000; Australia (not including New Zealand or the Islands), \$29,268,000; the Transvaal, \$171,640,123; Rhodesia and West Africa, \$18,631,070. There was a probably large decrease in the production of gold in Russia and Siberia in 1919. Some increase was probably made in the output of Central America and South America, which however, was doubtless offset by decreases in the output of other countries. The incomplete returns now available indicate that the world's production of gold in 1919 was between \$345,000,000 and \$350,000,000. The world's production in 1918 amounted to \$380,924,500.

The survey further states that information

received during the first six months of 1920 indicated a still further decrease in the production of gold in the United States and that the output for the year will probably be less than \$50,000,000. The production in Alaska, Colorado, California, Oregon and Montana will be much less in 1920 than it was in 1919, because water is very short for placer mining and many stamp mills are closed. Canada as a whole may increase its output, although the production of the Yukon districts will be smaller than last year. The output of Russia can not be estimated. That of Australia will show a decrease. That of South Africa and South America will probably show no radical decrease. According to the survey the indications are that the decrease in the world's production of gold in 1920 will not be so great as it was in 1919.

PROFESSOR VAN BENEDEN OF LIÈGE

A LIFE-SIZED bronze statue of Van Beneden, professor of zoology in the University of Liège, who died four years ago, was unveiled on May 24. The statue stands at the entrance to the Zoological Institute where Van Beneden worked and taught for over thirty years. We learn from the *British Medical Journal* that the ceremony was attended by a large number of his old colleagues, by representatives of other Belgian universities and scientific societies, and by delegates from British universities. Both King Albert and the Belgian Parliament were represented. The representatives of the British universities were Professor Sarolea (Edinburgh), Sir Leslie Mackenzie, of the Local Government Board of Scotland (Aberdeen), and Professor Sir Thomas Oliver (Durham). Professor R. W. Hegner, represented the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. When fully mustered the company marched in procession to the class-room where Van Beneden had taught and in which was gathered a large number of old and present students and his widow and relatives. The Rector was in the chair. Dr. Nolf, professor of pathology in the university, delivered a memorial address, during which a beautifully executed bronze mural tablet, pronounced to