70,976 births, this being only 2,287 less than in 1927. In the last quarter of 1927 the births fell below the lowest number recorded for this quarter even during the war. The decrease in the number of births in London since 1921 has averaged about 4,000 annually. In 1901, when the population was about the same, the births exceeded those of last year by 57,829.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NOTES

THE University of Cambridge has been offered £50,000 by the British Exchequer and a further £50,000 from the Empire Marketing Board toward the sum required to enable the university to accept the conditional grant of £700,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation, to provide new facilities for the study of agriculture, biology and physics, and to build a new university library.

THE Imperial University Library, Tokyo, built by a gift of four million yen from Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., has been dedicated, the American and British ambassadors and the minister of education participating. The building replaces that destroyed in the 1923 earthquake. It contains 600,000 volumes, largely gifts from America and Great Britain.

DR. RUTH WHEELER, professor of physiology and nutrition at Vassar College, has been appointed director of the Summer Institute of Euthenics at Vassar to succeed Professor Annie MacLeod, now dean of the college of home economics at Syracuse University.

PROFESSOR ANDREW HUNTER, of the University of Toronto, formerly on the faculty of Cornell University, has been appointed to the Gardner chair of physiological chemistry at the University of Glasgow.

DR. KARL HERMANN SCHEUMANN, of Berlin, has been called to a professorship of mineralogy and petrography at the University of Leipzig.

PROFESSOR A. FRAENKEL, of Kiel, has been invited to become the head of the Mathematics Institute of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem which was opened in October. He will begin his work in 1929. In the meanwhile Dr. Michael Fekete is the acting director of the institute.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

ON THE GENERAL STANDING OF ENTOMOLOGISTS AMONG MEN OF SCIENCE IN EUROPE

IN past years the attitude of men of science towards entomology has not been all that we entomologists could have wished. While this fact has not driven many of us into an inferiority complex, it has been a condition that has not altogether pleased us. With this thought in my mind, about a year ago I went into the library one day and spent an hour or so studying the records of the Royal Society of London and of the Académie des Sciences. I then wrote the three paragraphs that follow, and I am sure that they will be of interest to all biologists.

A very good way of judging the standing of entomologists among other scientific men from an early date to the present is to be gained by consulting the lists of members of the Royal Society. I have gone through the alphabetical list of the membership from 1663 to 1901, as published in the *Record of the Royal Society*, 1901. There are approximately 5,575 names in this list, and of these I recognize nineteen as entomologists. They are, in order, Valisnieri, 1703; Réaumur, 1738; Kirby, 1818; Spence, 1834; James Rennie, 1845; Lubbock, 1858; Siebold, 1858; Van Beneden, 1875; Salvin, 1875; MacLaclan, 1877; Godman, 1882; Trimen, 1883; Meldola, 1886; Pickard-Cambridge, 1887; Poulton, 1887; Walsingham, 1887; Sharp, 1890; Miall, 1892, and Elwes, 1897.

With the new century, however, there seems to have been more or less of a change, much of it due to discoveries in medical entomology. Of the 450 living members recorded in the *Yearbook of the Royal Society* for 1927, there are thirteen names of men who have done work with insects. Of these, Ross (1901), Alcock (1901), Shipley (1904), Nuttall (1904), Pocock (1911), Newstead (1912), Graham-Smith (1919) and Christophers (1926) all probably owe their election to their work connected with medical entomology. The remaining five are Meyrick (1904), Dixey (1910), Rothschild (1911), G. A. K. Marshall (1923) and Tillyard (1925). Of these, of course, Marshall, as director of the Imperial Bureau of Entomology, and Tillyard, as entomologist of the Cawthron Institute in New Zealand and now of the Department of Agriculture of Australia, should be ranked in some degree as economic entomologists.

It would be difficult to get a better view of the relative standing of the sciences among the scientific men than that afforded by a cursory study of the list of members and correspondents of the Académie des Sciences of France. I have gone through this list and find that from 1795 to 1927 there were apparently 1,025 such members and correspondents, and the list covers the whole scientific world. Of these approximately 1,025 names, there are those of fourteen who have done work in entomology, but, of these, four, namely, Bouvier, Giard, Henneguy and Siebold, were surely elected more for their work in other fields of biological science. Of the remaining ten entomologists, it is interesting to note that four have been elected since the beginning of the present century, namely, Avebury, Lameere, Marchal and Simon.

(Bouvier's election dates from 1902, Giard's from 1900 and Henneguy's from 1908.) The others (elected between 1795 and 1900) were Émile Blanchard (elected 1862; president 1883), Léon Dufour (elected 1830), Fabre (elected 1887), Geoffroy (elected 1798), Mulsant (elected 1873) and Savigny (elected 1821).

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VEGETABLE FOOD AS A SOURCE OF IODINE

IT has been shown by McClendon that there is a close correlation between the distribution of iodine in surface waters and the incidence of goiter in the United States, and the protective factor has been quite generally assumed to be the use of iodine-containing waters for drinking purposes. Fellenberg has made studies on the iodine content of spring waters and of soils in goitrous and non-goitrous regions of Switzerland, with similar correlation. When, however, Fellenberg examined vegetables grown in these districts, he did not find any such marked differences. He did find differences in milk and so concluded also that the water which the animals drank, rather than their feed, was the controlling factor.

Nevertheless, if iodine is present in the soil solution, we should expect plants to take it up and perhaps concentrate it in the tissues. The enormous ability of sea-weeds to concentrate iodine is well known. Both Fellenberg and Stoklasa have been successful in increasing the iodine content of beets by fertilizing with iodides, and Stoklasa found an increased growth when iodides were used, suggesting that iodine has an effect on the metabolism of the plant. If this is true, it seems likely that a part at least of the iodine of the plant exists in organic combination. No one has successfully proved the existence of such a compound, however.

Such public health measures as the addition of sodium iodide to water supplies, and the use of iodized salt, have become widespread. Sherman, however, has suggested that some less readily eliminated form of iodine, or perhaps some combination which more nearly approaches the structure of thyroxin, might be more efficiently utilized by the animal organism. Certainly the experiments of Abelin, Swingle, and Uhlenhuth have shown that in the metamorphosis of amphibian larvae, inorganic iodides are relatively without effect, as compared with iodine compounds of amino-acids.

The use of kelp as a feed for dairy cattle in order to produce an iodized milk for infant feeding has been the subject of research, and is now being commercialized.

South Carolina is practically free from goiter, and furnishes an excellent field for the study of iodine in human environment. Early results in our laboratory indicate that vegetable foods produced in parts of this state contain amounts of iodine which are truly enormous when compared with those usually reported.

If we assume as correct the value given by Fellenberg for the daily intake of iodine necessary to maintain equilibrium in a man (fourteen micrograms) some of these vegetables contain enough iodine to furnish a protective dose in the amount usually served at a single meal. For example, we have a number of samples of Irish potatoes from this state which contain enough so that, if none is lost in cooking, a single four-ounce potato per day will furnish the fourteen micrograms.

Leafy vegetables from this region have also been found to be very rich in iodine, beet-tops and lettuce running as high as one thousand parts per billion on the dry basis. Beet and turnip tops contain several times as much as do the roots. We have thus an additional argument for the inclusion of salad greens in the daily diet.

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UNPROFITABLE METEORS

I HAVE this year lost a week through meteors. Not in observations or calculations which proved to be false, but in interviews, articles, phone calls. "This is the *Daily Star;* we have a story from Cambridge, etc., etc." A week lost, not in advancing truth but denying fiction.

First it was the harmless Perseids which yearly in August slightly increase the observed hourly average of the eight million or more meteors which strike the earth's atmosphere every twenty-four hours. A scintillating full column of "press" from Washington, containing more astronomy than the average reporter could possibly know, promised a wonderful display, to be seen only once every one hundred and twenty years. Most cleverly buried at the close, as a possible sop to the managing editor's standard of truth, was the shrinking statement that this really happens every year. But the damage was done; the secretary had a hard week of phone calls; I unsuccessfully tried to persuade the reporters that it was nearly all a lie, and at three A. M. on the fateful morning sent home three auto loads of people scanning the perfectly cloudy sky from in front of the observatory.

And now it is the equally harmless Leonids, most disappointing at their last scheduled 33-year appearance in 1898–99, and not even due yet for three or four years!