

chemist throughout Europe, as well as in the United States. Mr. H. A. Huston, a member of one of the first classes conducted by Dr. Wiley at Purdue University, spoke of "the organizer." Mr. A. S. Mitchell, secretary of the food standards committee, gave tribute to "the pioneer."

THE College of Physicians of Philadelphia held a meeting October 23 to commemorate the anniversary of the birth of Galen, called the founder of experimental physiology. Ninety-three of the ninety-eight Galen publications, the property of the college library, were on exhibition. The meeting was addressed by Drs. William H. Welch, Charles W. Burr, Burton Chance and Giuseppe Franchini, of Bologna, Italy.

RECENT DEATHS

OLIVER PERRY HAY, retired associate of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, known for his researches in Pleistocene paleontology and as author of the "Catalog and Bibliography of the Fossil Vertebrates of North America," died on November 2 in his eighty-fourth year.

EDWARD WYLLYS HYDE, for twenty-five years pro-

fessor of mathematics at the University of Cincinnati and formerly treasurer and actuary of the Columbia Life Insurance Company, has died at the age of eighty-seven years.

HENRY EMERSON TREFETHEN, associate professor of astronomy at Colby College, died suddenly on November 3. He was seventy-five years old.

DR. CHRISTIAN ELJKMAN, professor of hygiene and medicine at the University of Utrecht, to whom the Nobel Prize in medicine was awarded for his work on beriberi, died on November 5, at the age of seventy-two years.

DR. WALDEMAR MORDECAI WOLFF HAFKINE, known for his work on Asiatic cholera, died at Lausanne, Switzerland, on October 27, at the age of seventy years. He discovered the principle and method of inoculation with attenuated virus against cholera. The Haffkine method of inoculation has been generally adopted throughout India and the government plague research laboratory founded by Dr. Haffkine has issued many thousands of doses to various tropical countries.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE FRENCH PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

RECENT mortality statistics for France are reported in the *Journal* of the American Medical Association to have caused deep regret. The birth rate in France had risen, whereas it was declining elsewhere in Europe. The mortality had begun to drop down somewhat and the whole country was pleased over the fact, when suddenly it began to rise again. From 675,110 in 1928, it rose to 741,104 in 1929, or 70,000 deaths more, in which the deaths of the new-born played but an insignificant part. The increase concerns chiefly the adults. The correspondent writes: "The condition can be due only to the inadequate nature of the public health service, in spite of all the exertions made in this direction. It is becoming more and more clear that the law of 1902 in regard to public hygiene, a law recognized by all as inadequate and which there is constant talk of amending, although nothing is done, is the true cause of this sad state of affairs. The fundamental weakness of the present law, to which frequent attention has been called, is that it leaves to the mayors of the communes the task of applying the hygienic measures that are needed. Unfortunately, however, the authority and influence of the mayor in the majority of the rural communes are entirely inadequate to the needs of the situation. Furthermore, the mayor, being dependent on the voters for his reelection, is not inclined to punish vigorously infractions of the health regula-

tions. Then, again, though the mayor may be honest in his endeavors, many of the communes are too poor to carry out the hygienic measures that are needed; for example, for the installation of a modern water system; or for the care of the indigent or of the mentally ill who have to be transported to the hospitals of the neighboring city. It is in such situations as this that government aid appears to be indicated. But it would require the expenditure of immense sums throughout France if the government were to attempt to do everything for the poorer communes that considerations of health might dictate. However, considerable sums have been appropriated by the government during the past two years to aid the communes, either in the form of subventions or in the form of loans at a low rate of interest, more particularly for the installation of water systems. Hygienic undertakings, which are the next thing in order after the introduction of a water system, may be aided to the extent of 800,000 francs (\$32,000) in place of 400,000 francs (\$16,000), as formerly. From the foregoing, it would appear unfortunate that improvement in the public health service, on which the lowering of the mortality depends, is a question of finance."

THE BRITISH NATIONAL PHYSICAL LABORATORY

THE report of the National Physical Laboratory for 1929, summarized by *The British Medical Journal*, contains a detailed account of the many investiga-