

A MEETING in commemoration of the late Dr. W. McKim Marriott was held at the Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, on January 3. The speakers included: Chancellor George R. Throop; Dr. Edwards A. Park, professor of medicine of the Johns

Hopkins University School of Medicine; Dr. Alexis F. Hartmann, professor of pediatrics at Washington University, and Dr. Philip A. Shaffer, professor of biological chemistry and head of the department, Washington University School of Medicine.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BRITISH MINISTRY OF HEALTH

THE annual report of the British Ministry of Health has been recently issued. The year 1935-36 was a period of outstanding health records. The death rate for infants under one year, at 57 per 1,000 births, and deaths from tuberculosis—fewer than 30,000—were the lowest on record. The maternal mortality rate, at 3.93 per 1,000 births, was the lowest since 1924.

According to a summary in the London *Times*, Sir Kingsley Wood, minister of health, said that:

Perhaps the important development in public health was that more and more they were not only seeking to prevent ill-health and disease, but were taking many measures to build up actively good health in the citizens, and adopting a positive policy which promoted directly healthy lives and living. In other words, they were concerned not only with prevention but with building. It was a policy of building up the citizen himself.

During the year over 250,000 expectant mothers had attended ante-natal clinics, and increased use had been made of infant welfare centers. But more must be done in regard to children between one and five years of age. Food was another factor of great importance. Nearly 150,000 samples of food and drugs were analyzed by public analysts during the year. It could be said that adulteration was disappearing, that the food supply was generally free from harmful ingredients, and that the customer was getting what he was entitled to get—good and wholesome food. As well as this, scientific investigation into the nourishment of the population was being carried on by the Advisory Committee on Nutrition.

The collection of family budgets, which is part of the Ministry of Labor's investigations into the cost of living, will provide much useful information about dietaries, but the Advisory Committee desired also that a number of quantitative dietary surveys should be carried out. I have asked local authorities to make these surveys, though the cost will, of course, be borne by the ministry.

A wonderful transformation had been worked in the water position by the £1,000,000 grant, and so far as our great industrial areas were concerned everything was perfectly satisfactory. There was now no danger of drought. Much more provision had been made for open spaces, parks, recreation grounds, playing fields and swimming pools. Loans sanctioned for these purposes during the last 12 months were some £2,300,000, and in addition nearly 250 acres of land for purposes of this kind were presented to the local authorities or to the National Playing Fields Association.

The work of preventing bad health must also be continuously pursued. This was particularly true in connection with housing. Already some 500,000 slum dwellers had gone to better, more decent homes. And every month now between 20,000 and 25,000 other slum dwellers were following them into these better conditions.

Smallpox has now been stamped out in this country. The one case in 1935 was the lowest recorded figure since 1918. They hoped to see more progress made against cancer, which was not yet defeated. Another "weak point in the armor" was maternal mortality, but there had been wonderful improvement in the last few years and steady improvement in the last 12 months.

THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

A REPORT of the past year's work of the New York Botanical Garden was presented on January 11 at the annual meeting of the board of managers by Dr. H. A. Gleason, deputy director, who is at present carrying on the work of Dr. Marshall A. Howe, who died on December 24.

According to his report, extensive reconstruction of Conservatory Range No. 1 on the west side of Bronx Park, commenced early this year, covering approximately two acres of ground, where thousands of exotic plants of decorative, botanical and economic interest are kept for public display, makes this conservatory one of the largest public greenhouses in the world. Its reconstruction—which will be carried out in such a way that at no time will the exhibits be sacrificed—will result in more effective showing of the collections.

The beauty of the grounds of the Botanical Garden will also be enhanced by more than a thousand trees and shrubs which were set out during the fall and by 800 young hemlocks which were added to the forest along the Bronx River. In the Thompson Memorial Rock Garden, one of the most frequently visited portions of the grounds, a bog area will be planted with special subjects this year and 7,000 heathers will be added to the heath planting. The new iris garden on the west side of the grounds will bloom for the first time this coming spring. Six thousand plants in 181 varieties comprise the collection.

Each member of the garden will receive, beginning this year, a subscription to *Addisonia*, which contains colored plates and descriptions of unusual plants. This will be in addition to the monthly *Journal* and the other privileges of membership.