

RECENT DEATHS

WILLIAM MERRILL ESTEN, emeritus professor of bacteriology of the University of Connecticut, died on April 16 at the age of eighty years.

DR. LUTHER SHERMAN ROSS, from 1892 to 1934 professor of biology at Drake University, died on April 5 at the age of seventy-eight years.

DR. GRANT FLEMING, head of the department of medicine of McGill University, died on April 9 at the age of fifty-six years.

DR. F. G. PARSONS, lately professor of anatomy, University of London, and research fellow in anthropology at St. Thomas's Hospital, president of the British Anatomical Society, died on March 11.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

VITAL STATISTICS OF ENGLAND
AND WALES

It is reported in the *Journal* of the American Medical Association that a total of 168,638 live births in England and Wales during the September quarter was the highest in any quarter since June, 1930. In comparison with previous third quarters it was the highest since 1926 and represented a birth rate of 16.1 per thousand of population, the highest since 1930. In the quarter 86,893 boys and 81,745 girls were born, a proportion of 1,063 to 1,000, compared with an average of 1,052 to 1,000 for the ten preceding third quarters. Stillbirths numbered 5,425, or 3.1 per cent. of the total births, the lowest percentage yet recorded.

For the first time in any quarter since 1936 the total number of deaths fell below 100,000. The figure was 97,276, which represents an annual death rate of 9.3 per thousand and was lower than that of any third quarter since 1927. It compares with 9.7 for the third quarter of 1941 and an average of 10 for the same quarters of the previous five years. There were 6,766 deaths of infants under one year, a rate of 40 per thousand live births. This was five below the average of the ten preceding third quarters and was equal to the low record that was reached in 1939.

There was a decline in the number of marriages. The total for the quarter of 95,713 was 8,620 fewer than in the corresponding quarter of 1941 and 31,937 below the average for the same quarters of the previous five years. The marriage rate of 18.3 per thousand of population was lower than that of any third quarter since 1936. The explanation of the decline seems to be as follows: The outbreak of war was followed by an increase in the number of marriages, which is now reflected in the rise in the birth rate. This was partly due to the fact that in addition to their ordinary pay soldiers receive allowances for wives and children. The increase in the number of marriages was largely due to earlier ones, thus diminishing those that would take place in the ordinary course in the later years of the war.

APPOINTMENT OF A JUDICIAL COMMISSION
ON BACTERIOLOGICAL
NOMENCLATURE

At the third International Congress of Microbiology held in New York City in September, 1939, a series of

recommendations of the Permanent International Committee on Bacteriological Nomenclature were accepted at the plenary session of the congress. The third and fourth recommendations were:

That the Nomenclature Committee, as at present constituted, shall continue to function under the auspices of the International Association of Microbiologists as it did under the International Society for Microbiology.

That the International Committee shall select from its membership a Judicial Commission consisting of twelve members, exclusive of members *ex officio*, and shall designate a chairman from the membership of the commission. The two permanent secretaries of the International Committee on Bacteriological Nomenclature shall be members *ex officio* of the Judicial Commission. The commissioners shall serve in three classes of four commissioners each for nine years, so that one class of four commissioners shall retire at every International Congress. In case of the resignation or death of any commissioner, his place shall be filled for the unexpired term by the International Committee at its next meeting.

By prompt action at and subsequent to the congress ballots were cast in spite of war conditions by twenty-six of the sixty-two members of the Permanent Committee on Nomenclature. These ballots when examined by the undersigned joint secretaries of the committee in November, 1942, were found to have resulted in the selection of those whose names appear below. These are grouped in the three classes specified by the permanent committee, those receiving the highest number of votes being placed in the nine-year class, those receiving the next highest in the six-year class, etc. Names in the classes are arranged alphabetically:

Elected for nine years (term normally expires in 1948): R. E. Buchanan, U. S. A.; A. J. Kluyver, The Netherlands; E. G. D. Murray, Canada; S. Orla Jensen, Denmark. *Elected for six years* (term normally expires in 1945): J. Howard Brown, U. S. A.; A. R. Prevot, France; J. Ramsbottom, Great Britain; Th. Thjötta, Norway. *Elected for three years* (term normally would have expired in 1942): A. Lwoff, France; R. Renaux, Belgium; A. Sordelli, Argentine; C. Stapp, Germany.

It has been decided to make this announcement in the hope that some plan for taking tentative action on questions of nomenclature can be developed by those members of the commission who can be reached under war conditions.