

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.

While no provision was made in 1939 for the contingencies that have arisen, it is felt that those elected should serve until successors are elected. Professor R. E. Buchanan has been asked to act as chairman *pro tem.* of the Judicial Commission as there is no possibility of securing an election under the rules as adopted.

R. ST. JOHN-BROOKS (London),
ROBERT S. BREED (Geneva, N. Y.),
Joint Permanent Secretaries, International Committee on Bacteriological Nomenclature

INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

THE *Experiment Station Record* reports that, according to a recent article in *Agriculture in the Americas*, a site for the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences has been selected on the outskirts of Turrialba, a town in the interior of Costa Rica approximately midway between the national capital of San José and the principal port of Puerto Limón. The tract chosen for the main buildings and campus consists of 1,235 acres adjoining the Costa Rica Rubber Experiment Station of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Most of the land has an elevation of about 2,000 feet, but wet lowland areas are included. The soils of the region are volcanic, temperatures average in the middle 70's, rainfall amounts to around 110 inches a year, and the humidity is high. The site is regarded as suitable for experimental cultivation of practically all tropical crops, for experimental work on livestock and dairying under tropical conditions, for the study of tropical reforestation and erosion control problems and for investigation of drainage practices. Near-by areas are well suited for the development of tropical crops not adapted to the lowlands.

The institute is to be managed by a corporation, directors of which will be the members of the Pan-American Union Governing Board, which consists of the United States Secretary of State and the diplomatic representatives in Washington of all the Latin-American republics. Projects will be recommended by a technical advisory committee composed of a member from each of the countries participating. At the outset, the organization will be financed largely by the United States, but it is expected that the other countries will join in the financing later under a convention to be signed.

The institute is conceived as a combination school of agriculture and agricultural research center, the facilities of which will be used by all the American republics. Its objectives, as generally agreed upon by agricultural leaders of the hemisphere, are to provide a place for research on tropical agriculture under favorable conditions, to furnish facilities for training

scientific personnel grounded in tropical agricultural problems, to develop mutual understanding among agricultural students of the Americas, to serve as a center for cooperative research projects and to strengthen cultural relations among the American republics.

Plans for the institute contemplate utilization of research facilities offered by the governments of several Latin American republics as well as those of Costa Rica. Among the organizations whose facilities have been offered are the experiment stations of Puerto de Díaz (in Salta) and Loreto (in Misiones), Argentina, situated in the subtropical region of the country; the station located at Chulumani near La Paz and the farms of Trinidad and of Palermo in Santa Cruz, Bolivia; the Agronomical Institute in Belém, State of Pará, Brazil; the experiment station at Palmira, Colombia; the experimental fields situated in the region between the capital and Santa Ana in the large region of Tapachula, State of Chiapas, Mexico; the experiment station at Tingo María, Peru; the Agricultural Experiment Station at Santiago de las Vegas, near Habana, Cuba; and the Institute of Tropical Agriculture at Mayaguez, Puerto Rico.

As previously announced, the director of the institute is Dr. Earl N. Bressman, whose headquarters are expected to be in Washington, D. C., with a small administrative staff. José L. Colom, chief of the division of agricultural cooperation of the Pan American Union, has been appointed secretary of the organization; Rex A. Pixley, business manager of the institute, and Robert A. Nichols, agriculturist in charge of field operations.

THE STUDY OF MEDICINE AND THE CHANGING ORDER

A COMMITTEE to study medicine and the changing order has been organized by the New York Academy of Medicine. The objectives of this committee are defined as follows:

To be informed on the nature, quality and direction of the economic and social changes that are taking place now and that are clearly forecast for the immediate future; to define in particular how these changes are likely to affect medicine in its various aspects; to determine how the best elements in the science of medicine and its services to the public may be preserved and embodied in whatever changed social order may ultimately develop.

Members of the committee include:

Drs. Malcolm Goodridge, *Chairman*; Arthur F. Chase, James Alexander Miller, Alan Gregg, George Baehr, Harry Aranow, I. Ogden Woodruff, Paul Reznikoff, Henry W. Cave, Tracy J. Putnam, Wilson G. Smillie, Jean A. Curran, Herbert B. Wilcox, Howard Craig, E. Tolstoi, E. H. Pool, Robert Pound and Iago Galdston, *Secretary*.

The committee plans to survey the changes that are currently taking place in our economic and social or-