

eration should be made the means of attaining still greater ends.

Brief as this appreciation is, we are all too conscious of the magnitude of the task. However, we can not close without a statement concerning the special delight which came to him in an honor which is rarely bestowed upon scholars. During an absence of four months in the winter of 1932 and spring of 1933, spent chiefly in Persia, Iraq and Syria, Dr. Smith traveled by motor upwards of 10,000 kilometers from the time he left Haifa until he reached Turkey. He secured more than 150 manuscripts—mostly Persian, Arabic and Hebrew. Among them were several mathematical pieces of importance, chiefly Arabic translations from the Greek classics, together with a fourteenth century manuscript of Omar Khayyám's algebra. The translations from the Greek include two Euclids, Archimedes on the circle and Aristarchus on astronomy. Also he supplemented his early nineteenth century manuscript of Ulug Begh's tables by three other earlier sets. In the lot were commentaries on al-Khowārizmī's algebra and Beha Eddin's arithmetic.

His collection, which contained also manuscripts of works on the Persian poets, he enlarged by copies, usually with miniatures, of the classics of Ferdousi, Hafiz, Sa'di, Omar Khayyám, Nazāmī, Omar ibn Ghares and others. His large library of Korans and Koranic literature, a few specimens of which are now in the Islamic exhibition in the Metropolitan Museum (New York), was greatly enriched by about 100 additional manuscripts, several with unusually fine decorations and bindings. These acquisitions formed part of his personal library of over 20,000 items which he presented to the library of Columbia University

(the additional works to the special library of Teachers College).

It is well known that mathematical scholarship has a correlation with musical interpretations and appreciation, but seldom with poetical temperament and metrical construction.

In appreciation of Dr. Smith's new metrical version of Omar Khayyám's "Rubáiyát" in 289 quatrains, which was the first work to be worthily illustrated by a Persian artist of high standing, and in recognition of his interest in the mathematical achievements of the country, the Persian Government conferred upon him, in the presence of a distinguished audience, the gold star of the Order of Elim, decoration of the first rank. After an address by Professor Smith, who was introduced by H. Highness Feroughi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the presentation was made by H. Highness Esfandiari, the oldest of the former ministers of state. The addresses upon the occasion were published in full in the Persian papers, in some cases with an English summary. An autographed portrait of H. I. Majesty, the Shah, was also among the highly prized souvenirs which were presented to him. He gave addresses in several of the cities and visited a number of the important excavations then in progress in Syria, Iraq and Persia.

In closing this brief sketch of his life and the material and spiritual aspects of it, may these always remain as a permanent tribute to his memory, to perpetuate his name and to enhance the already distinguished collection into which he has breathed the spiritual life of mathematics.

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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

VITAL STATISTICS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

THE wartime upward trend in the birthrate in England and Wales was maintained during the first three months of this year. According to statistics given in *The Times*, London, the Registrar-General's Return of Births, Deaths and Marriages registered in the quarter ended March 31 records a total of 184,145 live births. This represented a rate of 17.9 per 1,000 of the population, the highest first quarter rate since 1926. There were 11,874 more births than in the first three months of 1943, when the rate was 16.9.

Boy babies numbered 94,964, giving a proportion of 1,065 boys to every 1,000 girls. The average for the 10 preceding first quarters was 1,060. Births registered exceeded deaths by 37,941.

The provisional infant mortality rate, 58 per 1,000 related live births, was 14 below the average for the 10 preceding first quarters, and was the lowest rate on record for this period of the winter.

The death-rate was 14.2, compared with 13.5 during the same period a year ago. From 1938 to 1942 the average rate was 16.2.

The number of marriages, 62,599, was the second lowest for any quarter since the war and exceeded by only 262 the number in the same period a year ago, when the lowest war-time quarterly total was recorded. The marriages were 12,972 fewer than the average number for the first quarters of the five years prior to 1943, but were 8,338 higher than the corresponding first quarter average for the five years immediately preceding the war.