with his great knowledge of languages and absolute command of the matter in hand, left an indelible impression on the minds of all. Thus he contributed greatly to the unifying of botanical nomenclature, and his services at the memorable congress held at Cambridge, England, in 1930 will long be gratefully remembered.

The Committee of Swiss botanists consisting of Messrs. Christ, Hochreutiner, Oechslin, Rübel, Schinz, Schröter and Wilczek, plan to provide a bronze bust of Dr. Briquet to be placed in the Conservatoire botanique in Geneva, along with those of Vaucher, De Candolle, Boissier, Ascherson, Engler and others who very materially advanced the interests of the institution to which Dr. Briquet himself contributed in so large a degree. It is estimated that approximately $1,000 will be needed for this most worthy memorial. The committee fully realizes the difficulty it faces in raising the necessary amount at this time, and expresses the hope that American botanists will generally subscribe to the project, in order that the task of establishing the memorial may be consummated without delay. Subscriptions may be sent to M. le Prof. Wilczek, Palais de Rumine, Musée botanique, Lausanne, Switzerland.

E. D. MERRILL

NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

BIRTH RATES AND DEATH RATES

THE Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has made public the following facts in regard to the decline of the birth rate:

In twenty-four out of forty-two of the world's large cities the birth rate declined more than 5 per cent. in 1931 as compared with 1930.

The ten large German cities all showed declines of more than 10 per cent. in live births in 1931 over 1930. In Berlin the birth rate last year reached the low figure of 8.7 per 1,000, the lowest figure for any of the German cities having a population of 500,000 and over and one of the lowest birth rates for any city in the world. The 1931 birth rate in Berlin was the lowest in the history of that city and may be compared with the rates of 11.2, 17.5 and 11.4 per 1,000 prevailing in Berlin in 1925, 1920 and 1915, respectively. In Dresden and Frankfort the birth rate fell below 10 per 1,000 for the first time in the peace-time history of these two cities.

Every one of the fourteen large American cities recorded a drop in the birth rate during 1931. The decline was 22 per cent. in Boston and 17 per cent. in Detroit. The only large city in the United States with a birth rate over 20 per 1,000 was Pittsburgh, and there the rate declined more than 6 per cent. from the 1930 figure.

A favorable record was registered for mortality during 1931 in these world cities. All the German cities had either a substantially lower death rate in 1931 than in 1930 or else a stationary death rate. In Breslau and Frankfort the decline in mortality during 1931 was greater than 10 per cent. Munich, Leipzig and Dresden had declines of between 5 and 10 per cent. The Berlin death rate was unchanged.

Among fourteen of our American cities slight increases in the death rate were observed for five cities and decreases for six, with Detroit and Milwaukee leading in the latter classification. How much of the decline in mortality, as well as in the number of births, in Detroit was due to the emigration of persons by reason of the prevailing unemployment conditions is not known. The death rate in New York City showed a very small increase, less than 1 per cent. during 1931.

World economic conditions during 1931 affected chiefly the birth rate, and this may be a side effect of prevailing world conditions upon the marriage rate. The extent to which declining marriages in 1930 and 1931 affected first births, the crude birth rates and infant mortality rates in 1931 can not as yet be determined from the figures at hand. Death rates and infant mortality rates have not shown as yet any definite effect of the economic situation.

INVESTIGATION OF THE WOODS OF THE WORLD

A SYSTEMATIC investigation of the woods of the entire world by the International Association of Wood Anatomists is now well advanced, according to a statement made public by the secretary-treasurer, Professor Samuel J. Record, of the Yale School of Forestry, who recently announced the results of a conference, held in New Haven, of representatives of the Bussey Institution and the biological laboratories of Harvard University, the botanical department of Cornell University, and the forestry department of Yale. The organization has a membership of fifty investigators in eighteen different countries under the direction of an executive council of eleven members of eight nationalities.

The largest and most comprehensive collection of woods in existence at present is at the Yale School of Forestry. It contains over 21,000 fully catalogued samples representing over 6,000 named species of about 2,000 different genera. Cuttings large enough

for scientific studies have been made of selected groups and forwarded to workers in several institutions in the United States, Canada, England, Holland, Germany, France, Russia, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. Another large collection is at Buitenzorg, Java, with 15,000 samples of Dutch East Indian woods. There are also large collections in the Philippines, India, Federated Malay States, as well as in European countries, and hundreds of samples have already been distributed for special research.

The Yale Forestry School is trying the experiment of providing small subventions for local collectors in tropical countries and is said to be meeting with marked success. Over 300 timber samples have recently been received as the result of a local expedition into the high mountain range near Santa Marta, Colombia. The Lower Amazon region is being explored by Dr. Alphonso Ducke, of the Botanical Garden of Rio de Janeiro. Dr. A. Rimbach is collecting in the interior of Ecuador, a locality almost unknown to the outside world. A good collection of woods has been made for the first time on Mt. Kinabalu in British North Borneo. The most recent expedition is that of Mr. J. H. L. Waterhouse, of Australia, who is collecting on the British Solomon Islands Protectorate. This undertaking is in cooperation with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, England, and has the sanction of the high commissioner for the Western Pacific and the resident commissioner at Tulagi. There are, in addition, many local collectors in out-of-the-way places in the tropics.

The first step toward uniformity of botanical terms has been the making of a dictionary, now undergoing its second revision, which is in English, French, German, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese and Polish. This will be made the basis for a book in which every term will be fully illustrated and described.

GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED FOREST LANDS

THE merging in one department of all federal agencies and auxiliary services administering government owned or controlled forest lands has been recommended by an advisory subcommittee of the U. S. Timber Conservation Board headed by Dr. Henry S. Graves, dean of the School of Forestry of Yale University. According to a statement issued by the board, the principal recommendations are:

Merging in one undesignated department the several administrations of federally-owned or controlled forest lands, together with all auxiliary services pertaining thereto.

The abolishment of the present system of paying to counties a percentage of the National Forest receipts, substituting therefor direct contribution to be adjusted, in a degree, to local needs. This is to be paid annually and such procedures should possibly be helpful in improving state forest taxation methods.

Extreme conservatism in public timber disposal, apparently recognizing the principle that publicly owned timber is a reserve supply to be drawn on only as required to advance public interest, local and national.

Steps to harmonize federal forest acquisition and administration and to promote sound controls thereunder.

Cooperative study by government and states of problems of tax delinquency in critical regions where forestry protection is threatened. This may suggest either public acquisition or the use of public timber supply to extend the operations of private concerns toward the continuance of local community interests.

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERS

THE annual meeting of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers was held at Ohio State University from June 20 to 23. A symposium on "An Engineer's Policy for Agriculture" was a feature of the meeting. The president of the society, Leonard J. Fletcher, of Peoria, Illinois, general supervisor of agricultural sales of the Caterpillar Tractor Company, presided. The speakers were C. F. Kettering, of Detroit, president of the General Motors Research Corporation; J. T. Jardine, chief of the Office of Experiment Stations, U. S. Department of Agriculture, and Arthur Huntington, public relations engineer of the Iowa Railway and Light Corporation. Several hundred engineers, economists, farm leaders and scientific men from universities, technical schools, the industries and state and federal services participated.

The convention opened with sessions of the college division. Among the speakers were R. J. Baldwin and George Amundson of Michigan State College; Ben D. Moses, of the California Agricultural Experiment Station, and R. W. Trullinger, of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The topics discussed included cooperative relations with industries, agricultural engineering teaching, agricultural engineering research, agricultural engineering extension, relations with vocational education, and logical future development of research in agricultural engineering.

Dr. George W. Rightmire, president of the university, addressed the delegates on Tuesday morning and Mr. Fletcher delivered the annual presidential address. Other addresses included "Adventures in Science" by Dr. L. A. Hawkins, of the Research Laboratories of the General Electric Company; "Fuels for High-Compression Motors," by Thomas Midgley, Jr., a director of the American Chemical Society; "An Agricultural