

Smithsonian Institution at the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Royal Frederic University in Christiania, Norway. In 1912 he represented the U. S. National Museum at the centenary celebration of the founding of the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia. In 1935 he was a delegate to the sixth International Congress of Entomology at Madrid, Spain. In 1939 he was delegated by the Smithsonian Institution to attend the two hundredth anniversary of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (celebration cancelled) and to attend to official business of the Smithsonian Institution and the U. S. National Museum in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland.

Stejneger was a member of many scientific societies at home and abroad, among which may be mentioned: National Academy of Sciences; American Ornithological Union (fellow); American Society of Ichthyology and Herpetology (vice president, 1915; president, 1919; honorary president, 1937); American Society of Mammalogists; American Association for the Advancement of Science; Washington Academy of Sciences; Biological Society of Washington (president, 1907-08); the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia; Association of American Geographers; California Academy of Sciences (honorary member); Bergen Museum (life member); Christiania Academy of Sciences; Zoological Society of London (foreign member); Ornithological Society of Bavaria (corresponding member); British Ornithological Union (honorary member); German Ornithological Society; Peiping Natural History, etc. He was a member of the Cosmos Club.

Dr. Stejneger was decorated Knight, 1st class, Royal Norwegian Order of St. Olof in 1906 and Commander in 1939. He was also the recipient of the Walker Grand Prize of the Boston Society of Natural History.

On his eighty-fifth birthday the Smithsonian Institution was presented with a portrait of Dr. Stejneger, painted by Bjorn P. Egeli, purchased by subscriptions made by his associates and friends. On his eighty-sixth birthday Dr. Stejneger was tendered a sumptuous dinner by his associates and friends at the Cosmos Club. Dr. C. G. Abbot, presiding, called upon the following to respond to these toasts: Stejneger, the Youth—His Excellency Wilhelm Munthe Morgenstjerne; Stejneger as an Ornithologist—Dr. Alexander Wetmore; Stejneger as a Herpetologist—Professor Albert Hazen Wright; Stejneger as a Zoogeographer—Dr. William Mann; Stejneger as a Nomenclatorist—Dr. Charles Wardell Stiles; Stejneger as a Man—Dr. Albert Kenrick Fisher. These were followed by a response from Dr. Stejneger. On

this occasion there was presented to Dr. Stejneger a huge volume of letters expressing felicitations and appreciation written by scientific friends from all corners of the world.

Having been in almost daily contact with Stejneger since 1896, officially and unofficially, I can say that he was an ideal personification of the scientific spirit—a seeker of truth—ever open-minded, without pet theories, whose every study was a problem, the answer the summation of all the counts.

It was interesting to note the change of the man from a rather positive and somewhat aggressive disposition in youth to that of extreme tolerance and patience, particularly with the younger naturalists to whom he was ever willing to lend a helping hand. He was an ideal friend and host and the portals of his house were ever open to his friends from home or abroad. Stejneger was married to Marie Reiners on March 22, 1892, who, with his daughter Inga, survives him.

PAUL BARTSCH

U. S. NATIONAL MUSEUM

DEATHS AND MEMORIALS

DR. FRANK SCHLESINGER, professor emeritus of astronomy of Yale University, from 1920 to 1941 director of the observatory, died on July 10 at the age of seventy-two years.

DR. LESLIE TILLOTSON WEBSTER, member of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, died on July 12 in his forty-ninth year.

DR. WILLIAM JAMES FOSTER, assistant engineer of the alternating current engineering department of the General Electric Company, died on July 2 at the age of seventy-two years. Dr. Foster joined the General Electric Company in 1894 and became an assistant engineer in 1906. He was associated in his work with the late Dr. Charles P. Steinmetz.

BAYARD H. CHRISTY, former president of the Pittsburgh Patent Bar Association, died on June 20 at the age of seventy-one years. He was a life member of the American Ornithologists' Union and the author of numerous papers on birds in ornithological journals.

ARRANGEMENTS have been completed, according to a report in *Chemical and Engineering News*, for the establishment of a foundation in memory of the late Dean Herman Schneider. The Herman Schneider Foundation has been incorporated in Ohio "to encourage the development and advancement of science and education." A building has been purchased and will be ready for occupancy in the fall as headquarters

for the engineers and scientists of Cincinnati. There will be an auditorium seating 300, a smaller meeting room for about 100, several committee rooms, a large

library, reading rooms, reception rooms, office and recreation space, with possibilities of kitchen and dining-room facilities.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE BIRTHRATE OF GREAT BRITAIN

COMMENTING on a debate before the British House of Lords opened by Lord De La Warr and participated in by Lord Nathan, Viscount Samuel, Lord Geddes, Viscount Dawson of Penn and the Duke of Devonshire, *The Times*, London, on June 19 writes editorially as follows:

Lord De La Warr yesterday performed a useful service in the House of Lords by once again drawing attention to the implications of the decline of the birthrate; for the numbers and age composition of the population are, as he said, "the very basis" on which all plans of reconstruction must rest. The significance of present population trends is brought out by a comparison of the position in the 1930's, when there were over 41,000,000 people in England and Wales, with the position in the 1850's, when there were 18,000,000 people. To-day there are just under 10,000,000 women capable of bearing children, compared with only 2,250,000 in 1851. Yet in the ten years 1933-42 390,000 fewer babies were born in England and Wales than in the ten years 1851-60. The reduction of infant mortality since the middle of the last century has greatly improved a baby's chances of survival. Nevertheless there are scarcely more children under fifteen than in the early 1870's, and 2,250,000 fewer children to-day than just before the last war. In fact Britain, in peace as in war, is now living on human capital accumulated in a more fertile past. British mothers and fathers in the twenty years before the last war, although somewhat less fertile than their Victorian ancestors, produced a greater number of children than were born in any period of similar length previously or subsequently. Those children are the young and middle-aged adults of to-day. This generation of potential parents is of record size; and upon them falls the responsibility of bearing and rearing the children of the coming generation. Yet, although they show no aversion from marriage, such is their apparent aversion from parenthood that, if present trends continue, the succeeding generation will fall at least 20 per cent. short in numbers.

At the same time the present generation of potential parents will, in the next thirty years, grow into a generation of old-age pensioners. The proportion of old people over 64 in the total population has doubled itself in the past ninety years; it may well double itself again in the next thirty years. The present generation of adults under 50 is building up for itself far larger claims on the national income for its old age—in the form of pension rights—than any previous generation, and simultaneously it is failing to produce the workers who will have to maintain it in its years of retirement to a far greater extent than any previous generation. In the last analysis the aging of our population—with all that it implies in politics and social life,

in economic policy and in imperial and international affairs—is a far more serious issue than the total size of the population. It is the fundamental long-term problem which Britain—in common with all the peoples of Northern and Western Europe—will have to face. Ultimately Britain must have a population policy conducive to social views and social conditions which favor parenthood instead of frustrating it. There can be no question of waiting twenty or thirty years for such a policy. The consequences are certain and action can not be postponed.

Little, however, is yet known about the economics of family life, or about the ways in which, in different income and social groups and in families of different size, parents spend their money on children. Practically nothing is known about current attitudes to parenthood, about the reasons why childbearing is increasingly avoided, or about the whole complex of economic, social and psychological factors which now apparently frustrate parenthood but might be transformed in a cultural and material environment favorable to family life. On all these issues there are many opinions, but a startling lack of factual knowledge. Even although large-scale reforms to encourage parenthood must inevitably wait until victory has been won, there remains an immense task of basic fact-finding investigations, which should be begun without delay. A Royal Commission, suggested by Lord Geddes, may not be the most appropriate instrument for this work. But, however undertaken, there is a strong case for putting it in hand at the earliest moment.

THE BOTANIC GARDEN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

THE University of Cambridge correspondent of *The Times*, London, gives the following account of the history of the Botanic Garden of the University of Cambridge in connection with the large bequest to the garden received from the estate of Reginald Cory.

After several abortive attempts to found a physic garden in Cambridge University in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the first botanic garden was established in 1762, through the generosity of Dr. Walker, then vice-master of Trinity College, on a site five acres in extent now occupied by laboratories on the north side of Downing Street. Until a few years ago one of the trees originally planted, a fine specimen of *Sophora japonica*, still existed there.

Early in the nineteenth century the garden fell into neglect and, being in a confined space in the middle of the town, it became unsuitable for its purpose. In 1831 the university bought 40 acres of land along the Trumpington Road, on the outskirts of the town, for the site of a new botanic garden, which was officially