

numbers eight and includes a medical officer, Wing-Commander R. H. Winfield.

### Future of Base Metals

LIEUT.-COLONEL EDGAR PAM, president of the Institution of Mining and Metallurgy, delivered his presidential address at the annual general meeting of the Institution held on May 17. He pointed out that a not inconsiderable part of mankind as a whole depend for their living, or for their comfort and convenience, on base metals such as copper, zinc, lead and nickel; any important trend affecting their availability is therefore of great general interest. One effect of the War has been the concentration of a limited labour force on production at the expense of development work; the ore reserve of most important mines has been seriously depleted and, in spite of efforts intensified during the War, no ore bodies of real importance have been discovered for many years. Progress has been made in mining and metallurgical methods, but no epoch-making improvement stands to our credit since the development of flotation. With the relaxation of the demand for war uses, the supply in the near future should be ample; but within a few years a shortage seems indicated.

In order to help in the Colonies and even perhaps in Great Britain the opening up of new mines and industries, the Government should intensify activity along the following lines: (1) extend geological surveys, including the boring of promising regions; (2) support universities and technical schools by the equipment of laboratories, the provision of scholarships and, above all, by the assurance of such conditions of employment for staffs that the very highest grade engineers will be attracted to the posts; (3) improve transport facilities and help in building central power stations in selected areas; (4) improve the general education of the population, especially in the Colonies, with particular emphasis on health, safety and the dignity of labour; (5) give assistance in the development of promising new plant or processes which require finance beyond the power of industry to supply. The Institution has also a part to play. In the absence of a Chamber of Mines in London, it might consider setting up and fostering a permanent committee always available to help the Government or any other body at short notice by studying and reporting on technical, educational, health or welfare matters. Such a committee would also watch legislation and in some cases initiate discussion with the authorities in England or the Colonies.

### Preventive Medicine in Mexico

DR. ANGEL DE LA GARZA BRITO, director of the Mexico School of Hygiene (*Bol. de la Oficina Sanitaria Panamericana*, 23, 607; 1944), maintains that medical education in Mexico, while good on the whole, has failed to keep up with the rapid progress in medicine and especially its social aspects. He declares that medicine is tending to become a business rather than a profession. The only guide for the average student is the material success of men in certain fields. Public health is a neglected branch, and the time devoted to it in medical schools ranges from 43 to 100 hours, which is decidedly insufficient. An attempt should be made to correlate the clinical, medical and surgical aspects of disease with the preventive social aspect. The students, for example, should visit the homes of

certain patients in company with a social worker to gain an insight into the influence of background upon disease.

### Conference on Microfilm and other Documentary Reproduction

A CONFERENCE on microfilm and other means of documentary reproduction, organized by the Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux (ASLIB Microfilm Service, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, S.W.7), will be held at the Royal Society's Rooms, Burlington House, London, W.1, on June 1 at 10.30 a.m. and 2 p.m., and June 2 at 10.30 a.m. On June 1 there will be papers and discussions on methods of documentary reproduction and its scope and use; and on apparatus and its use in library services and training. On June 2, a 'brains trust' meeting will be held at which a scientific man, a humanist and a librarian will discuss with representatives of the legal profession, authors and publishers, the existing copyright legislation in connexion with documentary reproduction. Tickets of admission can be obtained from the ASLIB Microfilm Service: single session, 7s. 6d., whole conference, 15s. for members; 10s. and £1 for non-members.

### The Night Sky in June

NEW MOON occurs on June 10d. 04h. 26m. U.T. and full moon on June 25d. 15h. 08m. The following conjunctions with the moon take place: June 6d. 12h., Mars  $4^{\circ}$  N.; June 6d. 21h., Venus  $3^{\circ}$  N.; June 11d. 18h., Saturn  $0.6^{\circ}$  S.; June 16d. 21h., Jupiter  $4^{\circ}$  S. In addition to these conjunctions with the moon, Mercury is in conjunction with Saturn on June 24d. 11h., Mercury being  $2.2^{\circ}$  N. On June 11d. 18h. 38m., Saturn is occulted by the moon, reappearance taking place at 19h. 29.8m. No occultations of stars take place during the month. Mercury rises about 20 minutes before sunrise on June 1 and sets about an hour after sunset on June 30. The planet is in superior conjunction on June 16. Venus is a conspicuous object in the eastern sky in the morning hours, rising at 2h. 22m. on June 1 and 1h. 30m. on June 30. It attains its greatest westerly elongation on June 24. Jupiter sets about 1h. at the beginning of the month and at 23h. on June 30. Saturn is becoming difficult to observe and sets about an hour after the sun in the middle of June. There will be a partial eclipse of the moon on June 25, invisible at Greenwich, but visible in the antarctic regions, Australia and eastern Asia. Summer solstice is on June 21d. 19h.

### Announcements

PROF. W. J. HAMILTON, professor of anatomy at St. Bartholomew's Hospital Medical School, has been appointed regius professor of anatomy in the University of Glasgow.

PROF. C. H. LANDER, professor of mechanical engineering at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, London, and formerly director of fuel research, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, has been awarded the Melchett Medal for 1945 of the Institute of Fuel in recognition of his work on fuel during the past thirty years.

ERRATUM.—The new head of the Science Department at the South-East Essex Technical College, Dagenham, is Dr. J. F. J. Dippy, not Dr. Dipping as printed in *Nature* of May 12, p. 571.