

The Night Sky in March

FULL moon occurs on March 8d. 15h. 41m., U.T., and new moon on March 24d. 03h. 42m. The following conjunctions with the moon take place: March 4d. 10h., Jupiter 2° N.; March 13d. 22h., Saturn 6° N.; March 21d. 02h., Venus 4° S.; March 22d. 11h., Mercury 7° S.; March 27d. 11h., Mars 3° S.; March 31d. 16h., Jupiter 2° N. Mercury rises a little before 6h. up to the middle of the month, and about 5h. 30m. at the end of the month—only a quarter of an hour before sunrise—and is unfavourably placed for observation during the whole of March. Venus rises about 5h. up to the middle of the month, and an hour before sunrise on March 31. It will be conspicuous in the eastern sky and will become more easily observed in the northern hemisphere owing to its increasing northerly declination; the visible portion of its illuminated disk increases from 0.651 to 0.753, and its stellar magnitude varies from -3.7 to -3.5 between March 1 and 31. Mars rises at 22h. 30m. during the month; its eastward movement in Aries brings it close to δ Arietis about March 26, and during the month its stellar magnitude varies from 1.4 to 1.7, largely owing to its distance from the earth increasing from 176 to 197 million miles. Jupiter, visible throughout the night and early morning hours, sets at 5h., 4h. and 3h. on March 1, 15 and 31, respectively; its decrease in brightness from magnitude -2 to -1.8 is due to its distance from the earth increasing from 424 to 464 million miles during the month. Saturn rises at 0h. 10m., 23h. 10m. and 22h. 05m. on March 1, 15 and 31, respectively, and lies rather low in Libra, stellar magnitude 0.6–0.5, the small increase in brightness resulting from its distance from the earth decreasing from 886 to 848 million miles. Occultations of stars brighter than magnitude 6 are as follows, observations being made at Greenwich: March 1d. 22h. 02.6m., 99 Tau. (*D*); March 2d. 23h. 59.7m., 1 Gem. (*D*); March 10d. 21h. 33.5m., 370B, Vir. (*R*); March 28d. 19h. 09.6m., 284B, Tau. (*D*); March 28d. 21h. 53.4m., τ Tau. (*D*); March 31d. 22h. 49.7m., *g* Gem. (*D*), where *D* and *R* refer to disappearance and reappearance, respectively. Vernal equinox occurs on March 21d. 10h.

Announcements

DR. H. G. TAYLOR, director of research of the British Welding Research Association since 1947, has been elected president of the Society of Engineers.

DR. GERHARD HERZBERG, director of the Division of Physics of the National Research Council of Canada, has been elected an Honorary Fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciences "in recognition of his scientific eminence and of his outstanding contributions to knowledge".

THE second Marjory Stephenson Memorial Lecture arranged by the Society for General Microbiology will be given by Prof. C. B. Van Niel, of the Hopkins Marine Biological Station, Pacific Grove, California, at the Royal Institution, Albemarle Street, London, on April 18, at 6 p.m. He will speak on "Natural Selection in the Microbial World". The Lecture is open to the public.

THE U.S. Administration has asked the National Academy of Sciences to appoint a committee to advise on the formulation of Federal Government policy dealing with the relations between questions of loyalty

and the awarding of grants and contracts in support of unclassified scientific research.

DR. F. W. G. WHITE, C.B.E., chief executive officer of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, Australia, has been invited by the Government of Egypt to advise it on the organization of scientific research in Egypt. Dr. White will visit Egypt under the ægis of the Unesco Technical Assistance Programme for Egypt.

SINCE the Princess Alice appeal for a million pounds for the University College of the West Indies was made on January 15, more than £400,000 has been offered in the form of donations and covenants (see also *Nature* of February 19, p. 328). The money is to be used for the establishment and endowment of teaching and research scholarships, bursaries, etc., a chapel and for general purposes.

A CONFERENCE to commemorate the jubilee of the announcement by Albert Einstein in 1905 of the theory of relativity will be held this summer at Berne under the presidency of Prof. W. Pauli (Zurich). Prof. A. Mercier (Institute of Theoretical Physics, University of Berne) will act as secretary for the conference. Several authorities on cosmology, unified field theories, etc., have been invited to give addresses or take part in the scientific discussions.

THE Universities Federation for Animal Welfare will hold its Easter congress in St. Patrick's Hall, University of Reading, during April 1–4. The fee for the congress, which includes full board and all expeditions, is 3 guineas (students 30s.). Applications should be addressed to Miss M. P. Williams, UFAW, 7a Lamb's Conduit Passage, London, W.C.1, from whom further information can be obtained.

THE Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Department of Agriculture for Scotland propose to award, for the academic year beginning on October 1, a limited number of postgraduate scholarships in agricultural economics, husbandry, statistics and agricultural and dairy engineering. The closing date for applications is March 31. Further information can be obtained from the Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (Research Branch), 1–4 Cambridge Terrace, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1, or the Secretary, Department of Agriculture for Scotland, St. Andrew's House, Edinburgh 1.

A SUB-SECTION of the University and Research Section of the Library Association has been formed, the object of which is to foster the formation, growth and usefulness of libraries in colleges of technology and further education. The committee consists of the following: *Chairman*, L. L. Ardern (Manchester College of Technology); *Vice-Chairman*, E. G. Baxter (Coventry Technical College); *Honorary Secretary*, G. H. Wright (Westminster Technical College); *Honorary Treasurer*, E. R. Yescombe (Northern Polytechnic, London); *Members*, F. C. Adey (Leicester Colleges of Art and Technology), O. M. V. Argles (Hatfield Technical College), J. Fry (Cardiff Technical College) and E. R. McColvin (Regent Street Polytechnic, London). Further information can be obtained from the honorary secretary, Gordon H. Wright, Greenway Court, Hollingbourne, Kent.

A MEMORIAL service for the late Sir Edward Mellanby will be held at the church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London, at 11.30 a.m. on March 17.