

reports from nineteen observatories to have been provisionally centred at lat. 17° N., long. 148° E., and to have had initial time 1h. 14m. 53s. G.C.T. This epicentre was in the Pacific Ocean to the east of Zealandia Bank (Marianas Islands).

The Night Sky in March

THE time of the spring equinox is March 20 18h. when the sun enters the sign Aries. The moon is new on March 9 and full on March 23. Lunar conjunctions with the planets occur as follows: March 11d. 8h., Jupiter: 12d. 14h., Saturn: 12d. 23h., Venus: 14d. 0h., Mars. It will be seen from these times that the grouping of the bright planets is still a conspicuous feature of the western sky after sunset, although Jupiter is being lost to view as the month proceeds. On March 8d. 14h., Venus is in conjunction with Saturn, and on March 26d. 14h. with Uranus. Mars is in conjunction with Uranus on March 16. Neptune is in opposition on March 14, the distance from the earth being 2,716 million miles. The constellations of bright stars associated with winter evenings are now well westwards when the sky darkens after sunset. The regions of the sky which follows—Leo, Virgo, Ursa Major and Bootes—though less spectacular to the unaided eye, are of great interest on account of the rich fields of extragalactic nebulae. With small or moderate optical aid, there is also a number of interesting double stars well worth examining, including Castor (separation of components $3.6''$), γ I Leonis ($4.0''$), ξ Ursae Majoris ($1.7''$), γ Virginis ($5.7''$), ζ Ursae Majoris ($14''$) and ζ Herculis ($1.1''$). The last binary has a period of about 35 years and was discovered in 1782 by Sir William Herschel; the greatest separation of its components is $1\frac{1}{2}''$. Under favourable conditions the Zodiacal Light may be seen after sunset during this month. On fine evenings when the moon is absent, it is also worth while looking for auroras, for in March occurs one of the semi-yearly peaks in aurora frequency. [All times are given in Universal Time; subtract 1 hour from Summer Time.]

Announcements

THE University of Oxford has decided to confer the honorary degree of D.Sc. on Dr. E. V. Appleton, formerly Wheatstone professor of physics at King's College, London, and Jacksonian professor of natural philosophy in the University of Cambridge. Dr. Appleton is now secretary of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research.

PROF. A. L. MELLANBY will deliver the Thomas Lowe Gray Lecture of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers on March 15, at 6 p.m. The title of the lecture will be "Fifty Years of Marine Engineering".

THE Herbert Jackson Prize for 1939 of the L.M.S. Railway has been awarded to Mr. H. I. Andrews, of the Engineering Section, Research Department, Derby, for his paper entitled "The Development of a Refrigerating Machine for Use on Trains".

THE council of the Institution of Naval Architects has awarded the Premium of the Institution for the year 1939 to Mr. A. Nicholls, for his paper "The All-Welded Hull Construction of H.M.S. *Seagull*". The Wakeham Prize for 1939 has been awarded to Mr. A. Emerson, for his paper "The Effect of Shape of Bow on Ship Resistance (Part 2)".

DR. WARFIELD T. LONGCOPE, Baltimore, has been elected president of the board of directors of the Rockefeller Institute of Medical Research in succession to the late Dr. Charles R. Stockard.

THE Alfred Denker Foundation Prize for 1939 has been awarded by the German Otorhinolaryngological Society to Dr. Lotar v. Hofmann, of Vienna, for a work on the influence of diseases of the ear and upper respiratory tract on the development of the infant and young child.

THE Committee of the Physiological Society which was planning the Seventeenth International Congress of Physiology at Oxford in August 1941 under the presidency of Sir Charles Sherrington has decided, with regret, that the Congress must be postponed. Arrangements for the future will be made in consultation with the Permanent International Committee.

THE Central Association for Mental Welfare, in co-operation with the University Extension and Tutorial Classes Council, will, if sufficient applications are received, hold a course on mental deficiency at the London School of Hygiene, Keppel Street, W.C.1, from April 8 to 20. The lecturers will include Dr. A. F. Tredgold, Dr. Henry Herd and Miss Lucy Fildes. Further information can be obtained from Miss Evelyn Fox, c/o University Extension Department, at the School of Hygiene.

A RESEARCH scholarship of the value of £250 a year and tenable for two years has been founded by the Wrought Light Alloys Development Association to encourage and facilitate research in the application of light alloys to ship construction. The scholarship will be administered by a committee of the Institution of Naval Architects, and it is hoped to make the first award in September 1940. Full particulars of entry, which closes on July 31, can be obtained from the Secretary, Institution of Naval Architects, 10 Upper Belgrave Street, London, S.W.1.

A PRIZE of £20 with a diploma is awarded annually by the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society for an essay on some selected subject. The object is to encourage interest in the history and civilization of the East among non-Asiatics. In order to increase the basis of interest, the Council has decided to offer alternative subjects for the next competition. The two subjects are: (i) "Compare briefly the British, French and Dutch Systems of Administration in the East"; (ii) "The Development of Modern Turkish Literature". An essay on either subject may be submitted, and must be in the hands of the secretary at 74 Grosvenor Street, W., by October 1 next.