Mathematics at University College, London : Prof. W. R. Dean

THE election has been announced of Mr. W. R. Dean to the Goldsmid chair of mathematics in University College, London, in succession to Prof. H. S. W. Massey, who vacated the post on taking up the Quain chair of physics in University College (see *Nature*, 165, 793; 1950). Educated at Christ's Hospital, Mr. Dean entered Trinity College, Cambridge, as a scholar in 1919 and was elected to a fellowship four years later. Since 1929 he has been College lecturer in mathematics at Trinity and also lecturer in the University. Before these appointments he had been an instructor in mathematics at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, during 1922–23 and assistant professor of mathematics at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, London, during 1924–29. He served in the First World War as a lieutenant in the Royal Fusiliers, and during 1940–45 was a senior experimental officer in the Ministry of Supply. Mr. Dean has written a number of papers on elasticity and the motion of viscous fluids; his work was recognized by the award of an Adams Prize by the University of Cambridge in 1951.

Royal Society of Edinburgh : Awards

THE Council of the Royal Society of Edinburgh has awarded the Keith Prize for the period 1949–51 to Prof. Alastair Graham, Department of Zoology, Birkbeck College, University of London, for his paper on the molluscan stomach published in the Society's *Transactions* during the period of the award and for earlier contributions to molluscan morphology in the *Transactions* and *Proceedings* of the Society; and the Neill Prize for the period 1949–51 to Dr. J. Russell Greig, director of the Moredun Institute, Animal Diseases Research Association, Edinburgh, in recognition of his valuable contributions to the knowledge of methods of control of the diseases of domestic animals.

Royal Meteorological Society : Awards

THE Royal Meteorological Society has announced the following awards: Buchan Prize, founded in memory of Alexander Buchan, secretary of the Scottish Meteorological Society during 1861–1907, for the period 1947–51 to Dr. G. D. Robinson, for his outstanding contributions to the study of atmospheric radiation and other research; Hugh Robert Mill Medal and Prize for 1952, awarded in memory of Hugh Robert Mill, director of the British Rainfall Organization during 1901–19, to Dr. J. Glasspoole, for his outstanding contributions to the scientific treatment of the rainfall data of the British Isles.

Royal Institution

THE annual meeting of the members of the Royal Institution was held on May 1, with Lord Brabazon, president, in the chair. The following officers were elected: *President*, Lord Brabazon of Tara; *Secretary*, Prof. A. O. Rankine; *Treasurer*, Prof. G. I. Finch; *Managers*, Mr. E. R. Davies, Mr. P. Evans, Mr. H. S. Gibson, Mrs. H. K. Hawkes, Captain H. L. Hitchins, Mr. A. J. Hughes, Mr. L. B. W. Jolley, Dr. L. A. Jordan, Dr. J. Lawrie, Mr. A. J. Philpot, Mr. S. Robson, Dr. J. H. Schulman, Mr. P. H. Schwarzschild, Mr. K. E. Shelley, Mr. F. Wakeham; *Visitors*, Mr. F. G. Brown, Mr. W. Burrells, Dr. H. K. Cameron, Mr. A. D. R. Caroe, Mr. P. H. Carpenter, Mr. R. Cory, Mr. J. Home Dickson, Miss M. M. Grimes, Mr. M. M. Melinsky, Dr. E. H. Rayner, Dr. A. J. B. Robertson, Mr. W. E. Schall, Dr. L. Simons, Dr. P. C. Spensley, Dr. H. Stuart.

Astronomy in England during the Fourteenth Century

DR. DEREK PRICE has recently written two articles (*Times Lit. Supp.*, February 29 and March 7) in which he describes some very interesting facts brought to light by a recent examination of a manuscript entitled "The Equatorie of the Planetis" in the Perne Library, Peterhouse, Cambridge. This was written in 1392, and if, as is now thought probable, it is a hitherto unknown work of Chaucer, the manuscript is of great importance as it would provide for the first time an example of Chaucer's handwriting and also an uncorrupted specimen of his language and spelling. Various lines of evidence suggest that Chaucer was the author and not Simon Bredon, to whom it was once attributed, as it is now known that the latter died on or before 1372, the date when his will was proved. Probably the strongest evidence for the authorship is found in a note adjacent to a table for the conversion of years to solar days. This could not be seen completely until the volume had been freed from its nineteenth-century binding, and photographs of the note mentioning Chaucer by name have been reproduced in Dr. Price's article. Although it is admitted that this note could refer to some unknown planetary section of Chaucer's "Treatise on the Astrolabe", it is considered that this is less likely than the view that Chaucer was the author. If, however, the note does refer to the "Astrolabe", then only a very close collaborator could have known of its existence. The "Equatorie" appears to be a free adaptation from an Arabic or Persian source, presumably through a Latin translation. This is known from some of the technical terms that are used and also from the opening of the text, which is in typically Arabic style. The text contains a description of an instrument for finding the positions of the planets, and there are tables for determining the nodes of the moon, which are employed in the calculation of eclipses. The constructions of the instrument described are all based on the planetary theory contained in Ptolemy's "Almagest", and a very clear account is given of the technical terms and the method of using the astronomical tables which are found among medieval manuscripts.

Meteorological Office : Report for 1950

THE annual report of the director of the Meteorological Office for the year April 1, 1950–March 31, 1951 (M.O. 553; pp. 54; London: H.M.S.O., 1951; 1*s.* 6*d.* net) shows that major features in the work of the Office during the year were the provision of more specialized weather forecasts and the increase in the amount of research work in progress. The replacement in the B.B.C. Home Service from November 19, 1950, of the general land-area forecasts by regional forecasts supplied to B.B.C. regional headquarters by selected meteorological offices was an example of the former feature. The regional forecasts are more detailed and take better account of local needs, especially as regards agricultural purposes. With the development of jet aircraft, the amount of flying at heights above 40,000 ft. continued to increase, and the research in progress for several years on the measurement and forecasting of wind speed and turbulence at those heights was intensified. The basis of successful