

on March 16, is not accessible to observation. Mars rises at about midnight and is about  $1\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  preceding the third magnitude star,  $\beta$  Scorpii. The planet brightens during the month from  $+0.4^m$  to  $-0.3^m$ , its greatest brightness being reached in May. Jupiter, of stellar magnitude  $-1.6$  to  $-1.7$ , will be found low down in the morning sky. Saturn, being in conjunction with the sun on March 16, is above the horizon almost wholly in daytime. On March 8, Neptune (mag. 7.7) in Leo is in opposition; the planet's distance from the earth will then be nearly 2,714 millions of miles. The zodiacal light may be looked for on clear evenings after sunset at the beginning and end of the month. On or about March 3 and March 30, the night sky may also be scanned for any appearance of the aurora; auroras were observed 27 and 54 days earlier in northern England and Scotland respectively, and this 27-day sequence may possibly be continued in March. In any event, auroral displays may now be looked for generally on account of the active state of the sun, and there is also a higher frequency of magnetic disturbances at about the equinoxes. The following positions at 0<sup>h</sup> U.T. of Comet Whipple (1937 *b*) are given in Circular No. 636 of the *Bureau Central des Télégrammes Astronomiques*:

	R.A.		Dec.	
	h	m	°	'
March 4	13	49.9	+45	42
" 8		54.3	47	25
" 12		58.3	49	6
" 16	14	1.8	50	44

#### Announcements

THE new ultra-centrifuge in the Department of Biochemistry of the University of Oxford will be inaugurated at 4 p.m. on February 27. The Vice-Chancellor of the University, the president of the Royal Society and Prof. The Svedberg, of the University of Uppsala, will be present.

AT the annual general meeting of the Quekett Microscopical Club, held on February 9, the following officers were elected: *President*, W. E. Watson Baker; *Vice-Presidents*, E. A. Robins, J. T. Holder, Dr. C. Tierney, and Chetwynd Palmer; *Treasurer*, C. H. Bestow; *Secretary*, W. S. Warton; *Reporter*, A. Morley Jones; *Librarian*, W. E. Stone; *Curator*, C. J. Sidwell; *Editor*, W. P. Sollis. *New Members of Committee*: F. C. Grigg, N. I. Hendey, A. E. McClure, F. E. J. Oekenden, C. C. Swatman.

AT a meeting of the president and fellows of Harvard College in Boston, held on January 18, it was voted "that the thanks of the President and Fellows be sent to Sir Robert Hadfield for his beautiful and welcome gift of a picture appropriately commemorating in this University the University of Oxford, with which during a period of three hundred years Harvard has enjoyed close associations; and that the picture, with the accompanying gifts of books, scientific papers and other mementos, be gratefully accepted and duly recorded in connection with the recent observance of the Tercentenary of Harvard College". (A note on the picture in question,

which gives an unusual view of Oxford from the Sheldonian Theatre, appeared in NATURE of December 12, p. 1005.)

IN conjunction with its annual general meeting in May 1938, the Iron and Steel Institute is to organize a symposium on "Steelmaking". Particular attention will be given to acid and basic open-hearth processes. Further information can be obtained from the Secretary, Iron and Steel Institute, 28 Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

A DAVID ANDERSON-BERRY GOLD MEDAL, together with a sum of money amounting to about £100, will be awarded in July 1938 by the Royal Society of Edinburgh to the person who, in the opinion of the Council, has recently produced the best work on the nature of X-rays in their therapeutical effect on human diseases. A similar award will be made every three years. Applications for this prize are invited. They may be based on both published and unpublished work and should be accompanied by copies of relevant papers. Applications must be in the hands of the General Secretary, Royal Society of Edinburgh, 22 George Street, Edinburgh 2, by June 1, 1938.

THE Annual Malaria Control Course for Laymen will be held at the Ross Institute of Tropical Hygiene, Keppel Street (Gower Street), London, W.C.1, commencing on June 21, at 10 a.m., under the direction of Sir Malcolm Watson, director of the Institute. The course lasts five days, and is designed for planters and mining engineers, but it will be of interest to all (including missionaries) who are proceeding to the tropics. Application to attend the course should be sent in as early as possible to the Organizing Secretary at the above address. Admission is free.

THE Medical Society of Vienna will celebrate the centenary of its foundation in conjunction with the Union for Postgraduate Instruction on May 19-29.

THE next congress of the Society of German Men of Science and Medicine will be held at Stuttgart in 1938.

A NATIONAL medical council on birth control has been formed in the United States to control and supervise medical policies of the American Birth Control League, and to initiate, encourage and carry out appropriate scientific research in the medical aspects of birth control.

THE American Association for the Study of Goitre offers the Van Meter Prize of 300 dollars and two honourable mentions for the best essays on experimental and clinical investigation of the thyroid gland. The award will be made at the next annual meeting of the Association, which will be held at Detroit, Michigan, on June 14. The MSS., which should not exceed 3,000 words, must be presented in English, and a type-written double-spaced copy sent to the secretary, Dr. W. Blair Mosser, 133 Biddle Street, Kane, Pennsylvania, not later than April 1.