

### Electric Supply in East Africa

THE report of the annual meeting of the East African Power and Lighting Co. in Nairobi, at which Major Ward presided, is now available. Major Ward pointed out that in present circumstances it is not possible to give so much detail as in the past; but as the period since the outbreak of the War has passed with remarkably little change in the conditions in which the Company has been working, it has been able to maintain progress. Results in the East African Territories are largely affected by commodity prices, which were well maintained. The past year had shown considerable increase in the development of secondary industries. In 1939 the rainfall in the Nairobi area was the lowest on record, and the Company found much difficulty in meeting the demand of its consumers, but a supply was maintained until the rains broke. Actually there was a new 1,400 b.h.p. Diesel generator, due for delivery, but the War delayed shipment of the plant, which is the largest generator of this type in East Africa. It arrived in April last. Units sold in Kenya increased from nearly 14 million in 1938 to more than 16 million in 1939. In Tanganyika Territory, the Dar-es-Salaam and District Electric Supply Co. had an increased demand, requiring an additional plant capacity, and a further Diesel set was installed.

### Health Conditions in Venezuela

IN a recent paper (*Bot. Ofic. San. Panamer.*, 962; 1940) Dr. Julio García Alvarez, the Venezuelan Minister of Health and Social Assistance, remarks that the advance in public health in his country in 1939 includes the establishment of milk stations in 11 towns, of maternity hospitals in 10, the founding of a venereal disease dispensary-school, the completion of the Simon Bolívar tuberculosis sanatorium, the establishment of 40 centres by the Yellow Fever Service, and improvements in the national leprosariums and in the system of registering leprosy patients. In the campaign against malaria, 3,500 kgm. of quinine were distributed among 934 towns, and 312,985 treatments were given—two and a half times the number for the previous year. In 1939 the Ministry maintained 37 health units, a health commission, six health bureaux, 64 rural health officers and two port health officers, and its staff included 293 physicians, 14 sanitary engineers, 49 dentists, 43 laboratory workers, 244 inspectors, 294 nurses, 5 veterinarians and 1,237 unclassified employees as compared with 93, 2, 3, 26, 22, 54, 3 and 565 respectively in 1936.

### The Night Sky in January

THE moon is full on January 13 at 11h. and new on January 27 at 11h. U.T. No star as bright as mag. 5.0 is occulted during the month. Jupiter and Saturn are in conjunction with the moon on January 7 at 7h. and 12h. respectively; Mars is in conjunction on January 23 and Venus on January 25. Jupiter and Saturn are near the southern meridian in the early evening. Saturn is stationary in its movement among the stars on January 10, after which the planet

increases its right ascension very slowly. Jupiter's right ascension is increasing appreciably, thus bringing the two planets more closely together in the sky until the middle of February (conjunction on February 20 at 19h.). Jupiter's four inner satellites may be seen grouped most closely together at 20½h. on January 1, 4 (all eastwards), 11, 17 (all westwards), 19, 25 and 28. They will be seen widely grouped on January 8, 9, 13 and 31 (all westwards). Saturn's ring system is well presented for observation. Mars and Venus are both morning stars, the former predominantly bright in the morning skies before dawn. Clear evenings in January and February are associated with the brilliant assembly of stars attendant upon Orion. The Milky Way in this part of the sky is much fainter and less interesting than along its stretch visible during autumn evenings. During January, the night—sunset to sunrise—shortens by 1.2 hours in the latitude of London.

### Announcements

DR. JEAN RAYNAL, director of the Pasteur Institute of Shanghai, has been awarded the French Commission Gold Medal in recognition of his work.

A CENTRAL institute for the investigation of food-stuffs is being erected at Utrecht to be in close association with the Institute of Hygiene.

THE second Pan-American Congress of Endocrinology will be held at Montevideo during March 5–8, 1941. Further information can be obtained from Dr. Pedro A. Barcia, Casilla de Correo 255, Montevideo,

COMPULSORY examination of students at the University of Budapest has shown that about 50 per cent are suffering from diseases such as nephritis, heart disease, tuberculosis, syphilis, etc., without knowing it.

IN 1934 the United States had only a little more than 5,000 cases of smallpox. Since then there has been a rapid increase. In 1937 there were 11,673 cases and in 1938 about 15,000. These figures indicate that, with the exception of India, smallpox is more prevalent in the United States than in any other country in the world.

THE Lac Research Laboratory of the London Shellac Research Bureau is removing from the Ramsay Laboratories, Chemical Engineering Department, University College, London. Inquiries should be sent to Mr. A. J. Gibson, India House, Aldwych, London, W.C. 2.

### University of Birmingham: Air Raid Damage

INCENDIARY bombs have fallen on the buildings and in the grounds but the damage done was negligible. A part of the old building in the city which used to be the Department of Anatomy has been demolished.

The rooms of the Birmingham Natural History and Philosophical Society, which contained historic apparatus and a library of 8,500 volumes, have been totally destroyed.