

### Conference in London on Prehistoric Homesteads

A CONFERENCE on "Prehistoric Houses and Farms, and Some Later Comparisons" will be held by the Prehistoric Society in collaboration with the University of London Institute of Archaeology during April 22-24, 1949, at the latter's address at Inner Circle, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1. Admission to the Conference is free to members of the Society and of the Institute, and for all others the price of admission is 5s., inclusive for all days, tickets being obtainable at the door only. The honorary secretary of the Conference is Mr. T. G. E. Powell, Department of Prehistoric Archaeology, University, Liverpool, 3.

### Medical Research Council: Carcinogenic Action of Mineral Oils

THE Medical Research Council has appointed the following to advise and assist in the prosecution of research on the carcinogenic action of mineral oils: Prof. T. Ferguson, professor of public health, University of Glasgow (*chairman*); Colonel S. J. M. Auld, chairman of Research Group No. 2, Institute of Petroleum; Prof. J. W. Cook, regius professor of chemistry, University of Glasgow; Prof. A. Haddow, professor of experimental pathology, University of London, and director of the Chester Beatty Research Institute, Royal Cancer Hospital, London; Dr. J. O. Irwin, senior research worker, Medical Research Council Statistical Research Unit, London School of Hygiene; Prof. J. R. Squire, professor of experimental pathology, University of Birmingham; Dr. D. L. Woodhouse, officer-in-charge, Cancer Research Laboratory, University of Birmingham; Dr. J. M. Rogan, Medical Research Council Headquarters Staff (*secretary*). In addition, the Ministries of Fuel and Power, Health, and Ministry of Labour and National Service, have nominated representatives who will attend meetings when matters of interest to these departments are likely to arise.

### Royal Astronomical Society: Officers for 1949

AT the annual general meeting of the Royal Astronomical Society held on February 11, Prof. W. M. Smart, regius professor of astronomy in the University of Glasgow, was elected president. The following were also elected officers of the Society: *Treasurer*, Sir Harold Spencer Jones; *Secretaries*, Prof. R. O. Redman and Dr. A. Hunter; *Foreign Secretary*, Prof. F. J. M. Stratton.

### The Night Sky in March

FULL moon occurs on March 14d. 19h. 03m., U.T., and new moon on March 29d. 15h. 11m. The following conjunctions with the moon take place: March 13d. 06h., Saturn 3° S.; March 23d. 14h., Jupiter 5° N.; March 28d. 05h., Mercury 0.7° N. Mercury rises 45 minutes before the sun at the beginning of the month and 20 minutes before sunrise at the middle of the month, and is unfavourably placed for observation. Venus is too close to the sun during March for favourable observation. Mars is in conjunction with the sun on March 17 and cannot be seen during the month. Jupiter rises at 5h. 04m., 4h. 17m. and 3h. 22m. at the beginning, middle and end of the month respectively, and can be observed low down during the early morning hours in the constellation of Sagittarius. Saturn, in the constellation of Leo Major, can be observed throughout most of the night, setting at 6h. 45m., 5h. 45m. and 4h. 45m. at the beginning, middle and end of the

month respectively. Occultations of stars brighter than magnitude 6 are as follow: March 5d. 21h. 49.3m.,  $\delta$  Arie. (*D*); March 6d. 18h. 40.3m., 33 Taur. (*D*); March 8d. 20h. 21.8m., 136 Taur. (*D*); March 10d. 22h. 24.8m.,  $\omega$  Canc. (*D*). *D* refers to disappearance, and the latitude of Greenwich is assumed. Spring equinox commences on March 20d. 23h.

### Announcements

THE following elections have been made to the Paris Academy of Sciences: M. Constantin Dawidoff, to be *correspondant* for the Section of Anatomy and Zoology, in succession to the late Prof. Johan Hjort; M. André Donatien, to be *correspondant* for the Section of Rural Economy, in succession to the late M. D. Prianichnikov.

THE following appointments in the University of Birmingham have been announced: Dr. F. Morgan, to be reader in chemical engineering; Mr. M. Shaw, to be Tube Investments Research Fellow in the Department of Engineering Production. The following have been appointed lecturers in the subjects as indicated: Dr. G. M. Burnett (chemistry); Dr. W. G. Overend (chemistry); Mr. D. A. Bell (electrical engineering); Mr. J. C. Henderson (electrical engineering).

THE Council of the University of Sheffield has made the following appointments: Dr. Quentin H. Gibson, lecturer in physiology, to be senior lecturer in physiology; Frank A. Benson, lecturer in electrical engineering; Margaret Gunn, cancer research assistant (to work in the Department of Pathology under the auspices of the British Empire Cancer Campaign).

DR. C. West has relinquished the post of superintendent of the Ditton Laboratory of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research on transfer to the headquarters of the Director of Food Investigations, 20A Regent Street, Cambridge, for special duty. He is succeeded by Dr. R. G. Tomkins, of the Low Temperature Research Station, Cambridge. The Laboratory will continue to work mainly on problems of preserving fresh fruit and vegetables by refrigeration.

THE trustees of the Ramsay Memorial Fellowships for Chemical Research invite applications before April 16 for these fellowships, one of which will be limited to candidates educated in Glasgow. The value of each fellowship will be £400 per annum, with a grant for research expenses not exceeding £100 per annum. Particulars can be obtained from the Joint Honorary Secretaries, Ramsay Memorial Fellowships Trust, University College, Gower Street, London, W.C.1.

THE second 'chemical day' at Clausthal will be held, under the auspices of the Harz Section of the German Chemical Society in the British Zone, during March 4-5.

ERRATA.—In the account in *Nature* of December 25, p. 985, of the Nutrition Society's meeting on "Anti-vitamins", Dr. L. J. Harris was incorrectly reported to have stated that the active principle of 'Gammexane' is hexachlorobenzene; it should be, of course, the gamma isomer of benzene hexachloride (hexachlorocyclohexane). The statement attributed to Dr. E. Kodicek that live yeast contains thiaminase is also incorrect.