

history of the sun, the heat of which has been shown by geological evidence to have varied considerably during the last 1,000 million years. Simpson's pluvial theory is dealt with—a theory which assumes that increased precipitation of moisture in the form of rain and snow was due to an increase in the heat of the sun—but no satisfactory explanation has yet been given of the cause of the variation in the sun's heat. Regarding novæ and super-novæ, no explanation is suggested beyond the statement that "atomic energy has no doubt something to do with it". Among some of the problems still awaiting solution are the origin of the solar system, the evolution of the stars, the structure and evolution of the universe, and cosmic rays. This lecture provides a very helpful summary of the progress of astronomy in comparatively recent times and also of the problems still awaiting solution, some of which appear more intractable now than they did twenty years ago.

#### Royal Scottish Museum: Natural History Department

WITH the reopening of the Beasts of Prey Hall, the main halls and galleries belonging to the Natural History Department of the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, are now available to the public. These number twelve in all, allocated as follows: British fauna (2), mammals (3), extinct animals (1), foreign birds (1), amphibians and reptiles (1), fishes and molluscs (1), entomology (1), biology (1), and children's gallery (1). In addition, the study room, for use of students of the collections, is now open. During the War, many of the collections were removed, and the opportunity has now been taken to re-arrange much of the material. In addition, two specialist galleries for students are in use. An introductory hall entitled "The Story of the Earth", serving as an introduction to natural history and geology, is in course of preparation. A gallery of marine invertebrates is projected.

#### Universal Decimal Classification

THE first abridgment of the full universal decimal classification in English has been published by the British Standards Institution as B.S. 1000 A.: 1948. It consists of 128 pages and costs 25s. It is intended for use in libraries or private collections where detailed subdivision of subjects is not required, or in special libraries using the full classification in a given subject but requiring an abridged classification for other fields. It is based on the official abridgment in the Dutch language, fifth edition, with the help, mainly in the sciences, of the abridgment published by H.M. Stationery Office, under the title "Classification for Works in Pure and Applied Science in the Science Museum Library", third edition. The abridgment should form a useful introduction and guide to the complete fourth edition in English, which is being published by the British Standards Institution, section by section.

#### Correction of Magnesium Deficiency in Tomatoes

MAGNESIUM chlorosis is widespread among tomatoes grown under glass in Great Britain. It probably causes a considerable loss of yield, and economic methods for its correction are therefore urgently required. D. J. D. Nicholas shows (*J. Hort. Sci.*, 24, No. 1, 1-18; June 1948) that this can best be accomplished by sprays of two per cent of magnesium sulphate applied to the foliage five times at intervals of two or three weeks. This results in the application

of less than 5 cwt. per acre, compared with 10-20 cwt. of calcined kieserite, found necessary for soil applications. Soil factors probably immobilize a large proportion of the soil dressings of magnesium sulphate. Interactions of magnesium with potassium and nitrogen are also discussed in the paper.

#### Chelsea Polytechnic

THE fifty-third annual report of Chelsea Polytechnic is interesting because of the attractive way in which its items have been presented. Besides the usual information about the number and range of classes and examination successes, the report contains a detailed analysis of the occupations of evening students, the geographical distribution of students, the kind of research undertaken by advanced students and particulars of services rendered by members of the staff in a voluntary capacity to various kinds of learned and other societies. The examination statistics show that, during the last two years, one D.Sc., five Ph.D.s and seventeen M.Sc.s were obtained, figures of considerable significance for those who wish to see some evidence that the recommendations of the Percy Committee on Higher Technological Education have not been forgotten. This report, so clearly and precisely presented, is a fine example of what such a document can be in building up the corporate spirit of a large institution.

#### New Zealand Earthquakes during October 1948

NINE strong distant earthquakes were registered during October 1948 by the New Zealand seismographs situated at Auckland, Arapuni, Christchurch, Kamati, New Plymouth, Tuai and Wellington, according to the report from the Dominion Observatory, Wellington. In addition, eighteen earthquakes and tremors were felt by people in New Zealand during the month. The greatest of these had instrumental strength  $4\frac{1}{2}$  and was felt at Dunedin and Monowai on October 9. The next most intense had instrumental strength  $4\frac{1}{2}$ , and these were felt on October 16 at Otaki and Wanganui, and on October 29 at Hanmer Springs.

#### Editorial Board of *Chymia*

THE University of Pennsylvania Press has announced the appointment of Henry M. Leicester, professor of biochemistry, College of Physicians and Surgeons in San Francisco, as editor-in-chief of *Chymia: Annual Studies in the History of Chemistry*. Dr. Leicester, who succeeds the late Tenney L. Davis as editor, is chairman of the History of Chemistry Division, American Chemical Society, and associate editor of the *Journal of Chemical Education*. Prof. John Read, professor of chemistry and director of the Chemistry Research Laboratory, University of St. Andrews, is the new associate editor of *Chymia*. Other members of the editorial board are: Claude K. Deischer, Rudolf Hirsch, Herbert S. Klickstein and Eva V. Armstrong.

#### University of London: Appointments

THE following announcements of appointments have recently been issued: Prof. H. C. Darby has accepted an invitation to the University chair of geography tenable at University College, and Mr. W. O. Lester Smith to the University chair of sociology of education tenable at the Institute of Education, both as from October 1, 1949. Dr. P. E. Vernon has been appointed to the University chair of educational psychology tenable at the Institute of Education, as