

chairman and managing director of Messrs. Brown Brothers and Co., Ltd., Edinburgh, a former governor of the College and a member of its Advisory Committee on Engineering Studies.

University of Leeds

THE following gifts, among others, have been announced by the University of Leeds: *Department of Colour Chemistry and Dyeing*: The directors of Johnson Bros. (Dyers), Ltd., of Bootle, a dyeing and cleaning company controlling nine works (among them Pullars of Perth, Eastmans of London and Crockatts of Leeds) are providing an endowment fund of £2,000 to provide two studentships each of £50 a year in the Colour Chemistry and Dyeing Department of the University. This gift is intended to commemorate primarily the services rendered by the late Mr. Oswald Gunnell, recently chairman and managing director of the Company, and also in acknowledgment of help received from the University, at which no less than ten of its chemists and managers have been students in the Dyeing Department. *Department of Botany*: £870 over a period of two years from the Rockefeller Foundation towards the cost of a photographic assistant in plant biophysics. *Department of Leather Industries*: Additional equipment to the value of more than £3,000 from the Turner Tanning Machinery Co., Ltd.; equipment to the value of £500 from Messrs. Barrow, Hepburn and Gale; machine valued at £380 from Messrs. Baker Perkins, Ltd., Peterborough.

Prof. D. Thoday, emeritus professor in the University of Wales, has been appointed visiting professor in the Department of Botany during the session 1952-53; the title and status of reader in biomolecular structure has been conferred upon Dr. K. M. Rudall and Dr. J. MacArthur, Research Fellows in the Department of Biomolecular Structure.

A Recent Sunspot

THE largest sunspot for several months came over the sun's east limb on July 9, and for a few days its area exceeded one-thousandth of the sun's hemisphere. This area is not unusual for a spot (spots up to four and even five times this size were observed in 1946, 1947 and 1951), but with the present approach to the minimum of the 11-year sunspot cycle, the appearance of any big spot is noteworthy in itself. A second point of interest was the position of the spot nearly on the sun's equator—1° to 2° south. The circumstances recall the notable equatorial spot of May 1921 which had a mean area for its disk passage of 1,324 millionths of the sun's hemisphere; parts of the spot structure crossed the sun's equator, the mean position being $\frac{1}{2}$ ° north. This spot was associated with marked disturbance in the earth's geomagnetic field, culminating in a great disturbance lasting from May 13 until May 17—one of the greatest geomagnetic storms ever recorded. However, the recent spot has shown no such parallel of associated geomagnetic or ionospheric disturbance. Only a few minor flares have occurred in Greenwich daylight hours, one of these on July 16 being associated with transient fading on long-distance short-wave radio communication. The joint absence to date (July 19) of intense flares near this sunspot and ionospheric disturbances, both of the solar ultra-violet radiation type and that denoting the effect of solar particles, is significant. By the time this sunspot had reached the central meridian on July 15-1, the area had decreased to about half that when first seen.

Publications in Astronomy from the University of Manchester

THE recent growth of activities in astronomy at the University of Manchester has made it desirable to unify the University publications in this field under the general title of "Astronomical Contributions from the University of Manchester", and three series, numbered as follows, will be published. (1) *Annals*. This series is intended to include publications of observational data or other investigations which, on account of their extent, may be unsuitable for printing in current periodicals. The continuous operation of equipment at the Jodrell Bank Experimental Station for measuring meteor, solar and galactic noise has, in particular, yielded a great amount of observational material, and this will be published at irregular intervals as the occasion warrants. In addition, contributions to theoretical astronomy from the University and its Mathematical Laboratory, which because of their size may not be suitable for publication through other channels, will be incorporated from time to time. The first number, dated April 1952, has recently appeared. (2) *Jodrell Bank Reprints*. Papers on radio astronomy which are communicated to, and published by, the learned societies and other scientific journals in the usual way will be reprinted in this series. At present it includes sixty-eight contributions. Some of the back-numbers are available. (3) *Contributions to Theoretical Astrophysics*. This series, which will likewise consist mainly of reprints from scientific periodicals, was initiated recently and so far consists of three numbers (Nos. 1 and 2 being, however, rather scarce). All three series of publications will be distributed to a wide range of observatories, astronomical institutions and individual scientific workers. Requests for additional copies, or suggestions of additional addresses to which the publications should be sent, will be welcome and will be met as long as the supply lasts. Recipients are asked to reciprocate, on an exchange basis, with publications of their own, two copies being required, one to Prof. A. C. B. Lovell, Jodrell Bank Experimental Station, Holmes Chapel, Crewe, Cheshire, and the other to Prof. Zdeněk Kopal, Physical Laboratories, University, Manchester 13.

Protection of Plants in Europe

BOTH the working parties appointed by the executive committee of the European Plant Protection Organization have now issued their reports (from the Organization at 14 rue Cardinal Mercier, Paris). One party was set up to review the question of the danger to Europe of the introduction of hitherto unreported pests and diseases and to recommend appropriate precautionary measures. The other was asked to examine the quarantine restrictions imposed by governments with regard to certain pests and diseases affecting international trade, and to advise on the general principles on which such restrictions should in future be based. In the first report, twelve pests and diseases are listed affecting, among other crops, fruit trees, roses and potatoes, which would cause serious loss if they became established in Europe. A number of preventive measures such as field inspection, fumigation, post-entry quarantine, seed disinfection and the prohibition of certain packing materials are in general considered adequate to obviate the dangers; but in certain cases an embargo on import might be necessary. Stress is laid on the desirability of limiting permanent govern-