

abroad are now at the rate of four thousand consignments a year—the Isotope School at Harwell has had to introduce an additional course this year. The School was started at the Atomic Energy Research Establishment two years ago to teach the techniques of using and handling radioactive materials to scientists, medical men and industrial research workers. There has been such a heavy demand for places that an extra course will be held during July 6–31. Applications to be considered for this course should be sent to the Isotope School, A.E.R.E., Harwell, Berkshire, not later than June 8. Lectures and instruction at this School are given by members of the Atomic Energy Research Establishment staff. The school building, which is equipped with the latest apparatus, is just outside the security fence at Harwell. Students pay a fee of £40 for the course, and accommodation may be arranged for them, at an additional charge of £7 7s. a week, in a senior staff hostel near Faringdon.

Decennial Supplement for 1931 for the Census of England and Wales

THE Registrar General has recently published Part 3 of the "Decennial Supplement for 1931" (pp. 574. London: H.M.S.O., 1952; 70s. net). The tabulations for this volume were completed before the Second World War, but publication had to be postponed. The volume contains the aggregation of vital statistics (estimates of population, statistics of marriages, and births and deaths) for England and Wales during the period 1921–30. Most of the figures have already been published in the *Statistical Review*; but there are some tabulations of the less common causes of death for which annual figures are not sufficiently stable. For economy reasons no further volumes will be issued in this series.

The Night Sky in April

NEW moon occurs on April 13d. 20h. 09m., U.T., and full moon on April 29d. 04h. 20m. The following conjunctions with the moon take place: April 1d. 01h., Saturn 8° N.; April 12d. 02h., Mercury 6° S.; April 15d. 16h., Mars 5° S.; April 16d. 02h., Jupiter 6° S.; April 28d. 04h., Saturn 8° N. In addition to these conjunctions with the moon, Mars is in conjunction with Jupiter on April 27d. 16h., Mars 1·1° N., and Mercury is in conjunction with Venus on April 27d. 21h., Mercury 7·2° S. Mercury is too close to the sun during April for favourable observation. On April 1 Venus sets at 20h. 40m. and is conspicuous in the western sky; it becomes a morning star after inferior conjunction on April 13, but is too close to the sun to be easily observed until near the end of the month, when it rises an hour before sunrise. Throughout April Mars sets at about 21h. and is visible for some time after sunset; towards the middle of the month it lies a little south of δ Arietis, and at the end of the month is about 4° south of the Pleiades. Jupiter sets at 22h. 10m., 21h. 35m. and 20h. 55m. on April 1, 15 and 30, respectively; it lies fairly close to Mars during the month and, as is mentioned above, there is a conjunction between the planets on April 27. Saturn rises at 19h. 35m., 18h. 30m. and 17h. 25m. at the beginning, middle and end of the month, respectively, and can be seen until the morning hours; the planet is in opposition on April 14, and throughout the month lies a little north of Spica. Occultations of stars brighter than magnitude 6 are as follows, observations being made

at Greenwich: April 24d. 20h. 13·6m., p^4 Leon. (D); April 26d. 21h. 18·2m., q Virg. (D); April 30d. 23h. 58·0m., π Scor. (D); D refers to disappearance. The Lyrids meteor shower will attain a maximum about April 21.

Announcements

THE Council of the Linnean Society of London has awarded the Linnean Medal for 1953 to Prof. P. A. Buxton, director of the Department of Entomology, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street, London, W.C.1.

THE title of reader in plant biochemistry in the University of Birmingham has been conferred on Dr. F. W. Norris, lecturer in the Department of Applied Biochemistry.

THE following appointments have been made in the University of Leeds: Dr. (Mrs.) Edith Robinson, lecturer in the Department of Botany; Dr. G. Dixon-Lewis, research chemist in the Department of Coal Gas and Fuel Industries. Dr. R. Brown, reader in plant physiology in the Department of Botany, has resigned his post.

MR. G. R. H. NUGENT, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, will inaugurate open days at the Electrical Research Association's Field Station at Shinfield on May 4. The Station will be open to members of the Association and other invited guests during May 6–8. Opportunity will be given of seeing work sponsored by the Association at the Poultry Research Department of the University of Reading and other adjoining stations.

THE regional weather services of the Western German Republic have been grouped into a central organization, to be known as the "Deutscher Wetterdienst", with Dr. Rudolf Benkendorff as director. The address of the headquarters of the organization is Bockenheimer Landstrasse 55, Frankfurt am Main.

THE Cecil Peace Prize of the Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth has been awarded for 1952 to K. H. Dawson, of the London School of Economics (at present at the Graduate School, Princeton University). The subject for the competition for 1953 is "Has the United Nations Organization been successful in carrying out the objects for which it was formed as defined in the Preamble and Chapter 1 of the Charter? Do you recommend any, and if so, what amendments in the terms of the Charter?" Essays must be sent before November 1 to the Secretary, Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth, 5 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1, from whom further details can be obtained.

THE Association of Agriculture, the Institute of Rural Life at Home and Overseas, and Seale-Hayne Agricultural College are organizing a course on "The Countryside—a Medium for Teaching", to be held at Seale-Hayne Agricultural College, Newton Abbot, Devon, during April 8–13. The course, which is designed to impart to teachers and other interested persons a better knowledge and enjoyment of the countryside, is residential and costs £5 10s. inclusive. Application forms and further information can be obtained from the General Secretary, Association of Agriculture, 238–240 Abbey House, 2 Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.