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The Night Sky in January

New moon occurs on Jan. 13d. 03h. 01m., U.T., and full moon on Jan. 27d. 14h. 4m. The following conjunctions with the Moon take place: Jan. 1d. 23h., Jupiter 7° N.; Jan. 8d. 11h., Mars 2° N.; Jan. 8d. 18h., Saturn 4° N.; Jan. 14d. 22h., Mercury 4° S.; Jan. 16d. 09h., Venus 7° S.; Jan. 29d. 06h., Jupiter 6° N. In addition to these conjunctions with the Moon, Mars is in conjunction with Saturn on Jan. 14d. 21h., Mars 1.6° S., and with Antares on Jan. 26d. 21h., Mars 5° N.; also, Jupiter is in conjunction with Regulus on Jan. 27d. 19h., Jupiter 0.7° N. Mercury sets at 17h., 17h. 55m. and 16h. 10m. on January 1, 15 and 31, respectively. Its stellar magnitude varies from -0.7 to 2.1, and the visible portion of its illuminated disk from 0.864 to 0.046 during the month; it will not be so conspicuous towards the end of the month in spite of the fact that it attains a greater altitude. Venus sets at 18h. 25m., 19h. 10m. and 20h. on January 1, 15 and 31, respectively. Its stellar magnitude varies from -3.4 to -3.5 and the visible portion of its illuminated disk from 0.868 to 0.796, its distance from the Earth varying between 129 to 113 million miles. Mars rises shortly after 4h. during January and has an eastward motion through Libra and Scorpius. Its stellar magnitude varies from 1.7 to 1.5, and its distance from the Earth from 195 to 171 million miles. Jupiter rises at 20h. 40m., 19h. 35m. and 18h. 20m. at the beginning, middle and end of the month, respectively, its stellar magnitude varying between -1.9 and -2.0, owing to its distance from the Earth decreasing from 437 to 411 million miles; its westward motion in Leo can be observed by comparing its positions with reference to Regulus during the month. Saturn rises at 4h. 50m., 4h. and 3h. on January 1, 15 and 31, respectively, and has an easterly motion in Scorpius; but it lies rather low for good observation in the British Isles. It is fairly close to β Scorpii during the month, and its stellar magnitude remains 0.8. Occultations of stars brighter than magnitude 6 are as follows, observations being made at Greenwich: Jan. 1d. 02h. 07.4m., ω Leo. m (R); Jan. 16d. 18h. 32.5m., 51 Agr. m (D); Jan. 31d. 06h. 39.0m., 13 B Vir. (R), R and D referring to reappear-

ance and disappearance, respectively. The Earth is in perihelion on Jan. 2d. 13h. The Quadrantid meteors are active on the first few days of January, but moonlight will interfere with their observation.

Announcements

MR. J. P. DONCASTER, at present in charge of the collections of aphids and allied groups of insects in the Department of Entomology of the British Museum (Natural History), has been appointed a deputy keeper of the Department.

DR. R. L. MITCHELL, head of the Department of Spectrochemistry, Macaulay Institute for Soil Research, Craigiebuckler, Aberdeen, has been appointed deputy director of the Institute, and Dr. E. G. Williams head of the Department of Soil Fertility.

MR. W. T. O'DEA, keeper of the Department of Aeronautics and Sailing Ships in the Science Museum, London, has been released for three months to undertake an exploratory mission for Unesco as technical assistance expert in Ceylon under the Colombo plan. He will advise the Government of Ceylon on the establishment of a science museum at Colombo and will call at New Delhi on his return journey to discuss with representatives of the Government of India their proposals for science museums in four widely separated localities.

THE Scientific Instrument Manufacturers' Association is arranging to hold a permanent exhibition of instruments made by member firms at its headquarters at 20 Queen Anne Street, London, W.1. The exhibition, which will be opened on February 9, is not intended to be public, but it will be open to anyone interested in using scientific instruments.

A David Anderson-Berry Silver-Gilt Medal and a sum of about £100 will be awarded in 1956 by the Royal Society of Edinburgh for work on the therapeutical effect of X-rays on human diseases. Both published and unpublished work may be submitted. Applications and copies of relevant papers must be sent to the General Secretary, Royal Society of Edinburgh, 22 George Street, Edinburgh 2, not later than March 31.

APPLICATIONS are invited for a Drummond senior fellowship and not more than two Drummond junior fellowships for research in nutrition, both tenable for two years. The senior fellowship will be worth £900 a year with research expenses not exceeding £50, and up to £90 a year for superannuation, and the junior fellowship will be worth £500 a year, with research expenses not exceeding £75 a year. Application forms, to be returned by January 27, and further information can be obtained from the Honorary Secretary, Drummond Trust, University College, Gower Street, London, W.C.1.

THE authors of the article entitled "Laboratory Design", published in *Nature* of November 26, p. 999, write: "This investigation was assisted by a grant made by the Agricultural Research Council to the Nuffield Foundation. Acknowledgments also are due to Sir William Ogg, director of the Rothamsted Experimental Station at Harpenden, and to Prof. H. D. Kay, director of the National Institute for Research in Dairying, Shinfield, Reading, and their staffs for giving facilities for the survey described, and to the Trustees and Director of the Nuffield Foundation for permission to publish the work".