Magnetic Observatory or Principal Magnetic Base Station, near Washington, D. C., has been selected, and the erection of the buildings is now in progress. A temporary magnetic observatory, equipped with the Eschenhagen magnetograph, is in operation at Baldwin, Kansas. Sites for the magnetic observatories in Alaska and Hawaiian Islands will also soon be selected, and the erection of the necessary buildings will begin within a year. At certain specified times simultaneous observations, at present simply of declination, are made by all the magnetic parties, in which important work, beginning with September, various universities distributed over the entire country will co-operate.

Magnetic Observatory at Tacubaya, Mexico.—Senor Moreno sends us the following information: "In the beginning of last year, having finished our magnetic department we installed the apparatus and began taking observations in March. A little later we were obliged to take out the apparatus on account of the excessive humidity which appeared in two of the subterranean rooms. After the rainy season had passed some provisions were made to prevent the recurrence of dampness in the future, and we were successful to the extent that the two rooms mentioned are entirely dry. On the 5th of February of this year we began anew our observations with three direct reading instruments."

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*JENNER INSTITUTE OF PREVENTIVE MEDICINE.**

THE annual general meeting of the Jenner Institute of Preventive Medicine was held at Chelsea on June 29th last, under the chairmanship of Lord Lister. Among those present were Sir Joseph Fayrer, Surgeon-General Hooper, Professor Greenfield, Professor Simpson, Dr. McCrury, Dr. Bridgwater, Colonel Addison, and Mr. Shattock. The governing body reported that the transference of Lord Iveagh's gift for the promotion of the objects of the Institute had been effected, and a governing body which would in future control its affairs had been constituted. The Director (Dr. Allan Macfadyen) reported satisfactory progress in the work of the Institute during the past year. The fitting up of the Institute buildings, with the exception of the museum, was now completed. Among other additions during the year were a physiological room, a room for incubating purposes, and a cold-storage room.

Mr. Briggs had presented a Hansen apparatus for yeast culture, and considerable additions had been made to the library. The second volume of the *Transactions* contained nineteen contributions and included a paper by Professor Ehrlich. Three papers had been communicated to the Royal Society on the influence of the temperature of liquid air and hydrogen upon bacterial life. The experiments were conducted with the kind co-operation of Professor Dewar and a further series was contemplated. In conjunction with Dr. Morris and Mr. Rowland a paper has been submitted to the Royal Society on Expressed Yeast-cell Plasma (Buchner's 'Zymase'), and the research had discovered a new method for triturating organisms. Systematic investigations were being carried out in the bacteriological department upon enteric fever, tuberculosis, and the etiology of cancer, with the co-operation of Dr. Hewlett and Mr. Rowland. Various investigations had been published during the year by Dr. Hewlett and other members of the staff. It was proposed to set on foot a systematic inquiry into the nature and origin of food poisons. A number of workers had utilized the laboratories for purposes of research during the year. Special investigations had been carried out for public authorities during the year on tubercle in milk, on glanders and anthrax, and other subjects.

The illustrations for the *Transactions* had been prepared by Mr. J. E. Barnard in the photographic department of the Institute. Dr. Harden, chemist to the Institute, was continuing his investigations on the chemical products of pathogenic and other micro-organisms. Dr. Harris Morris, lecturer on Technical Mycology, reported that a number of students had made use of the Hansen Laboratory, and that researches on yeasts, diastases, zymase, and other subjects of technical interest had been prosecuted. Dr. George Dean of the antitoxin department, had made experiments on the best conditions for obtaining powerful toxins and

* From the *British Medical Journal.*

antitoxins, and the results of other workers had been tested; as a result a higher average of antitoxic value had been reached. Several races of streptococcus pyogenes had been used in immunizing horses with the view of obtaining a polyvalent serum. Researches dealing with problems of immunity were in progress, and papers had been published in the diphtheria bacillus and a new pathogenic streptothrix.

THE BRITISH NATIONAL PHYSICAL LABORATORY.

A DEPUTATION of prominent English men of science waited on the financial Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Hanbury, M. P., on June 5th with the object of securing a site in the Old Deer Park, Richmond, for the new National Physical Laboratory. Another deputation had an interview with Mr. Hanbury a few days before to protest against the proposed buildings as an interference with the amenities of Kew Gardens, and it was to meet their objections that the present deputation waited upon Mr. Hanbury. Amongst those present were Lord Lister, Lord Rayleigh, Lord Kelvin, Sir Courtney Boyle, Sir John Wolfe Barry, Sir M. Foster, M.P., Sir E. Carbutt, Sir N. Barnaby, Sir Andrew Noble, and Professors Rücker, Clifton, Schuster, Fitzgerald and Elliott.

According to the report in the London *Times* Lord Lister said the Royal Society was deeply interested in the question of the new National Physical Laboratory, and they were supported by all the scientific bodies in the kingdom.

Lord Rayleigh, as Chairman of the National Physical Laboratory, said they recommended "That the institution should be established by extending the Kew Observatory in the Old Deer Park, Richmond, and that the scheme should include the improvement of the existing buildings at some distance from the present observatory." They had already the Kew Observatory, which had been doing very valuable work cognate to that proposed to be undertaken by the new institution, and that alone suggested the Deer Park as a natural site. Besides, there were very few sites that were likely to be at all suitable, because the character of the work to be carried out was of the kind to be removed from all kinds of mechanical and electrical disturbances. Electrical disturbance was a new feature, but one that might be made from tramways anywhere. On that ground no private site could meet the case, because there was no security from buildings of other kinds creating mechanical and electrical disturbances.

This consideration greatly limited their choice of sites for this laboratory. That principle was recognized by the Greenwich Observatory being placed in the middle of a park; the German institution at Potsdam was in a park; and the International Bureau of Weights and Measures stood in the park of Sèvres. In a public park they had some guarantee that the buildings would be free from electrical and other disturbances. Some comment had been made on the provisional arrangement with the woods and forests as to the 15 acres required. One of the reasons for that large area being taken was that they wanted one of their buildings to be at a considerable distance from the other. It had never been proposed to cover the whole 15 acres with buildings. The actual area proposed to be covered with buildings was only a quarter of an acre, or the 60th part of the whole area proposed to be taken.

Sir John Wolfe-Barry said that he was placed on the committee which recommended this site for the laboratory as the representative of applied science, numbering 9000 members, and the general opinion was that it was extremely important to establish this physical laboratory from the point of view of the trade of this country and the huge commercial interests at stake. The committee gave the greatest possible attention to the question of site, and they came to the conclusion that Kew was very suitable. The one thing they had in view was quiet, and Kew possessed advantages which could not be given at any other place within a reasonable distance of London. It was easily accessible and it was quiet. They wanted a good space because they did not want the public to approach too near.

Mr. Hanbury, in reply, said: I hope the deputation are under no misapprehension whatever as to our strong desire that this scheme for a physical laboratory should be carried out.