

receive, as soon as possible, information or suggestions for presentation by those unable to attend in person.

BIRTHDAYS AND RESEARCH CENTERS

UNDER this title *Nature* is publishing each week under the birthdays of scientific men occurring during the week autobiographical notes on the work that they are doing. The four statements in the issue of March 21 include the following:

March 22, 1868—PROFESSOR ROBERT A. MILLIKAN, chairman of the executive council of the California Institute of Technology and director of the Norman Bridge Laboratory.

I am still pursuing quite intensively my studies in the field of the cosmic radiations; for they have relations to meteorology not yet fully explored, and their values at very high altitudes still have something to teach us about the precise nature of the cosmic atom-building processes. Also, as an adjunct to these studies, I am interested in the problem of the origin of the very heavy elements and, as a possible clue to its solution, am collecting further data, by a new method, on the terrestrial distribution of the radioactive elements. Artificially stimulated

radiations of high penetrating power are also a part of the program.

March 25, 1863—DR. SIMON FLEXNER, For. Mem. R.S., director of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research.

The constantly growing number of those diseases of man, the lower animals and plants shown to be brought about by filterable agents or viruses, emphasizes their known significance. Among human beings, a disease of this character is poliomyelitis or infantile paralysis. The modes of infection and of extension of the virus of this disease are questions of outstanding importance. Ever since 1909, when the first serial transmission of the disease to monkeys was accomplished (Flexner and Lewis), these questions have commanded attention. The indications, then secured and since confirmed, are to the effect that the virus is nerve conducted, as it enters and even as it leaves the body of infected human beings and animals *via* the respiratory mucous membranes.

Not only is this finding of importance in so serious a disease as poliomyelitis, but corresponding questions are of high interest in connection with virus diseases generally, as is also the question of the precise nature (chemical or otherwise) of the viruses themselves.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

ACCORDING to press dispatches Professor Albert A. Michelson has improved after a somewhat critical nervous collapse. Dr. Michelson has been carrying on his experiments in the vicinity of Pasadena, measuring the velocity of light in a vacuum tube. It is said that he has been working until after midnight, returning from the Irvine Ranch, near Santa Ana, at three o'clock in the morning. The experiments are being continued during Dr. Michelson's illness by his assistants, Dr. Francis G. Pease, of the Mount Wilson Observatory, and Dr. Fred Pearson, of the University of Chicago.

PROFESSOR G. H. PARKER, director of the Harvard Zoological Laboratory, has been elected an honorary member of the Philosophical Society of Cambridge, England.

M. ELIE CARTAN, professor of mathematics at the University of Paris, has been elected a member of the Paris Academy of Sciences to succeed the late Paul Appell.

DR. PHILIP FURTWÄGLER, professor of mathematics at the University of Vienna, has been elected a member of the Prussian Academy of Sciences.

THE University of Edinburgh will confer the honorary degree of doctor of laws at the graduation ceremonial on July 2 on: Dr. E. J. Allen, director of the Marine Biological Laboratory, Plymouth; on

Sir George Berry, member of Parliament for the Scottish universities, formerly lecturer in ophthalmology in the University of Edinburgh, and on Sir Walter Morley Fletcher, secretary of the Medical Research Council.

At a meeting of the senate of the University of London, Sir John Rose Bradford, president of the Royal College of Physicians, was nominated to receive the honorary degree of doctor of medicine, and Professor Kappers, of Amsterdam, the degree of doctor of science.

THE University of Darmstadt has conferred the honorary degree of doctor of engineering upon Bernard Arthur Behrend, of Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts, "for meritorious work in the construction of induction machines."

SIX chemists received the honorary doctorate of laws in connection with the dedication exercises of the building for chemistry, erected at a cost of \$500,000, at Indiana University. These were: Dr. Fuanobu Isobe, chemical engineer of Tokio, Japan; Dr. O. C. Martin, chemical and metallurgical engineer, Antwerp; Dr. L. F. Rettger, chemist and bacteriologist, Yale University; Dr. O. B. Perry, consulting mining engineer, San Francisco; Dr. Earl Blough, chemical and metallurgical engineer, New York City; Dr. J. N. Currie, zymochemical engineer,