

## Obituary.

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### Dr. Johnstone Stoney.

George Johnstone Stoney was born in 1826, the eldest son of George Stoney of Ockley Park, King's County, Ireland. Educated privately he was sent early to Trinity College, Dublin, of which he was M.A. and Sc.D. In 1848 he accepted for a time the post of assistant at Lord Rosse's Observatory; afterwards he became Prof. of Natural Philosophy at the Queen's University in Ireland, of which also he was Secretary from 1857 until its dissolution in 1882. He was elected an F.R.S. in 1861, a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society in 1860, and a member of our Association in 1890.

Dr. Stoney contributed a large number of articles to various scientific journals on astronomical and physical subjects. The earliest of these were on collimators for adjusting reflecting telescopes, which appeared in the British Association Reports for 1856 and 1869; while in later reports were papers on double lines in spectra, meteor streams, &c. In the *Astrophysical Journal* (Chicago) he wrote on atmospheres on planets and satellites, presence of helium in the Earth's atmosphere, perturbations suffered by the Leonid meteors (this in conjunction with Dr. Downing), escape of gases from terrestrial and planetary atmospheres, &c. The Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Dublin have several contributions from his pen, chiefly on mechanical and physical subjects, on which also he contributed a large number of interesting articles to the *Philosophical Magazine*. Papers by him appeared in the *Monthly Notices* of the Royal Astronomical Society on astrophysical observations, meteoric swarms, shadow-bands in eclipses, dimension of Saturn, &c., also in the Proceedings of the Royal Society of London, on the physical constitution of the Sun and stars, Crookes's force, motion of molecules, &c. He contributed also to the *Meteorologische Zeitschrift*; issued a memoir at Berlin in 1876 on "The National System of Coinage," and wrote a preface to Fournier d'Albe's treatise on the electron theory, which appeared in 1906.

He died on the 15th of July 1911.

W. T. L.

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### Francis Richard Wegg-Prosser.

Mr. F. R. Wegg-Prosser, who died at Hertford on the 16th of August, at the advanced age of 87, was elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society in 1875. He published in 1889 a work entitled *Galileo and His Judges*, in which not only the circumstances of his trial and condemnation are treated in detail, but the scientific views generally of that philosopher and the opinions held in his time are discussed in a very interesting and instructive way.

W. T. L.

### The Rev. James Dunne Parker.

The Rev. James Dunne Parker, who died at Stevenage, Herts, on the 12th of October last, graduated at the Queen's University, Ireland, in 1854. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Meteorological Society in 1875, a member of our Association in 1893, and a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society in 1895.

W. T. L.

### Arthur Cottam.

We regret also to notice the death of Mr. Cottam, which occurred at Bridgwater, after a long illness, on the 23rd of November. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society in 1862, and was an original member of our Association. In the year 1889 he published an excellent series of large-scale star charts, extending from the north pole to between  $35^{\circ}$  and  $40^{\circ}$  south declination. At the time of his death he was in the seventy-sixth year of his age.

W. T. L.

### William Thynne Lynn.

We greatly regret to have to record the sudden death of Mr. William Thynne Lynn, B.A., F.R.A.S. Though for many years past his health had been feeble, and for the last three years he had in addition suffered much from neuritis in his right arm, he continued to be indefatigable in his visits to the Reading Room of the British Museum, and in his attendance at the meetings of the Royal Astronomical Society and of this Association. Up to the last he was an early riser, and was accustomed, whatever the state of the weather, to take a long walk on Blackheath before breakfast; but on Monday, December 11, as he was rising, it became evident that he was very ill—the affection soon showing itself as a stroke of paralysis, to which he succumbed in a few hours.

Mr. Lynn was born August 9, 1835, in Sloane Street, and was the eldest son of William Bewicke Lynn, F.R.C.S., and of Ellen his wife, *née* Thynne. His father had served as surgeon in the 5th Fusiliers in the Peninsular War, and was with the Allied Troops at the occupation of Paris after Waterloo. Later, he was for many years Senior Surgeon of Westminster Hospital.

Mr. Lynn passed his boyhood in Claygate, Surrey, and was educated at King's College, London, graduating as B.A. in the University of London in October 1861. He entered the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, as a supernumerary computer in 1854, and remained there for one year, passing thence to the Cambridge Observatory, where he was assistant for about a year and a half. He then returned to Greenwich Observatory as assistant on September 20, 1856; and, at the beginning of 1875, he was promoted to the rank of first-class assistant. Never very robust, he was unable to stand the strain of night observation, and his health compelled him to resign on January 31, 1880.

Mr. Lynn did not allow his retirement from the Observatory to diminish his interest in Astronomy, and he devoted himself chiefly to historical and biographical studies in connection with it, creating for himself quite a special rôle. Painstaking, exact, and well-acquainted with classical literature and the French and German languages, he contributed, chiefly to the *Observatory Magazine*, many hundreds of short notes, full of interesting and out-of-the-way information. He became a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society on February 14, 1862, and communicated to the *Monthly Notices* more than 20 papers, mostly short, and dealing with stellar proper motions. He joined this Association on May 30, 1900, serving on the Council for the sessions 1901-04, 1905-08, and 1909 to the time of his decease. He communicated a number of papers, chiefly concerned with classical and mediæval astronomy, or historical details. His death leaves this particular field without any other labourer, no one else seeming to possess his experience, knowledge, or antiquarian zeal; and the fact that, after the breakdown of his health necessitated his retirement from Greenwich, he should have thus been able to work out for himself this important and special line of research is a fresh illustration of the truth that difficulties are the opportunity of the earnest man.

Mr. Lynn took also a deep interest in church work and was made a lay reader in the diocese of Rochester in 1880, and worked in connection with St. Mark's Church, Deptford, up to 1904.

He was buried in Lee Cemetery on Friday, December 15, 1911, and the funeral service, which was held at All Saints' Church, Blackheath, was attended by a large number of friends and relatives, beside representatives of the Royal Astronomical Society, the British Astronomical Association, and the Royal Observatory, Greenwich.

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## Correspondence.

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### Brooks's Comet, 1911 *c*.

An inspection of the print from Mr. Longbottom's photograph of this comet published in the October number of the *Journal* leads to the question whether there is possibly some mistake as to date or otherwise. The print shows star trails making an angle of about  $45^\circ$  with the comet's tail on the date September 24th. Photographs taken at the Royal Observatory, Edinburgh, throughout the whole of September show the angle between the tail and star trails as very small, not mounting up till the comet reappeared as a morning star in October. I enclose one of the date of Mr. Longbottom's photograph, taken with 50 minutes' exposure with a 4-inch portrait