

THE OBSERVATORY,

A MONTHLY REVIEW OF ASTRONOMY.

 Vol. XXXVI.

SEPTEMBER, 1913.

 No. 465.

THE SOLAR PHYSICS OBSERVATORY, SOUTH KENSINGTON.

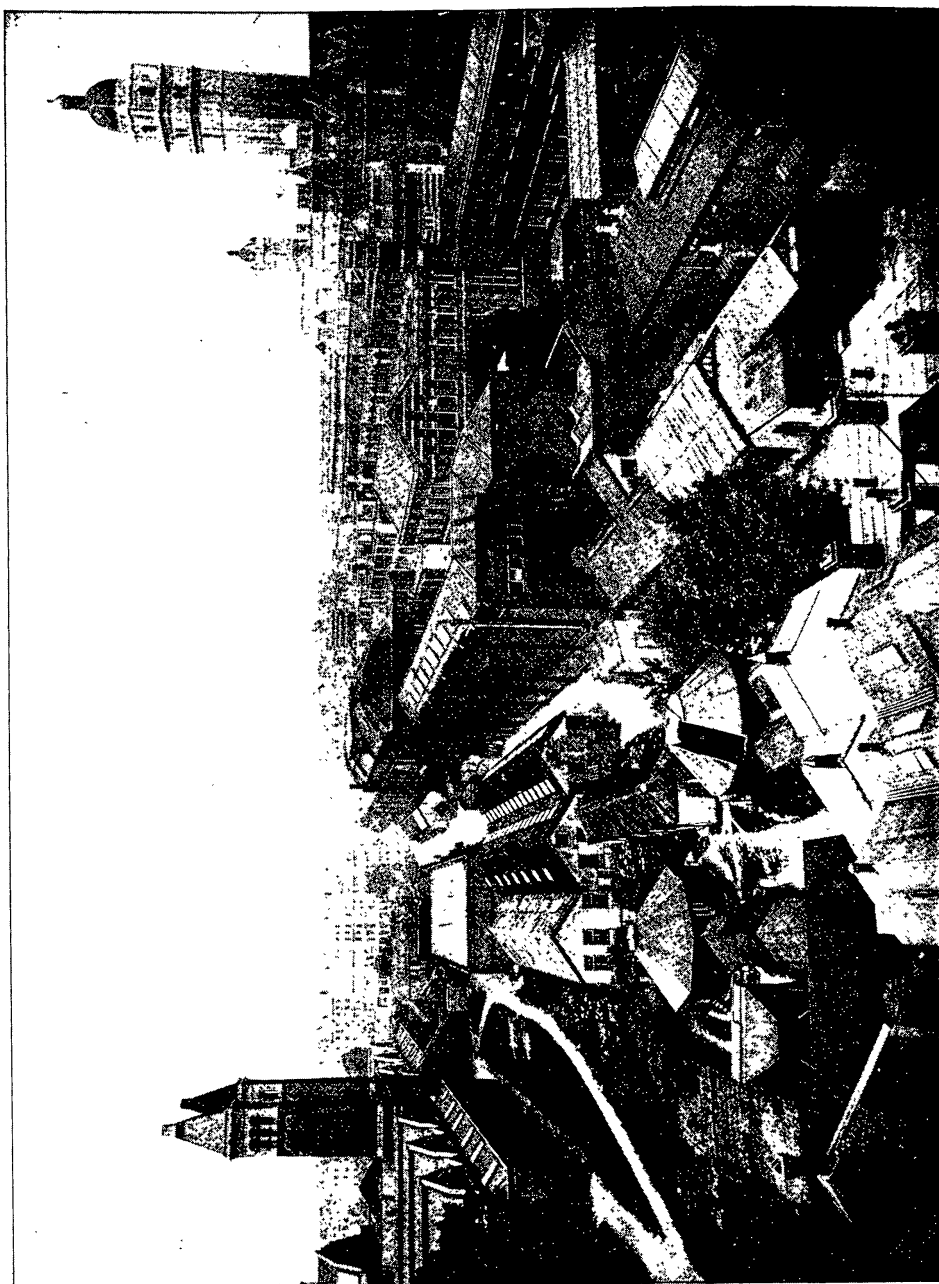
WE publish in this number a Plate whose interest now is mainly historical. It will enable our readers to form some idea of the growing disadvantages which attached to the recent site of the Solar Physics Observatory; and it will enhance their appreciation of the valuable results in solar and stellar physics obtained there by Sir Norman Lockyer and his staff.

The open dome in the foreground contained the 10-inch Cooke refractor and 6-inch Henry prismatic camera. To the left may be seen the dome for the 36-inch reflector and in front of that building the photographic enlarging room, the Rowland concave grating house, and the building for the Hammersley equatorial (which carried the calcite prismatic camera and the Dallmeyer camera). At the far end of the path can be seen the other group of buildings belonging to the Observatory; the small dome for the 9-inch reflector, the 18-inch siderostat shed—for feeding the spectroheliograph,—and the dome for the 30-inch reflector are visible beyond the laboratory. To the left of the Plate may be seen part of the Natural History Museum, and on the right, crowding right on to the Observatory, the Science Museum; soon the old site of the Observatory will be covered over by the rebuilt Science Museum. The Chemical and Physical Laboratories of the Royal College of Science lie still further to the right, and the dome used by Prof. Fowler for instruction in practical astronomy may be seen in the distance. On the extreme right may be seen the Imperial Institute, the present home of London University.

With the transfer of the Solar Physics Observatory to Cambridge there passes away the *Committee on Solar Physics*, a body which has carried out much useful consultative work in connection with the Observatory since its foundation in 1879. Many names well known in astronomy and physics may be found in its complete list of members; two members of the original committee

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survive, Sir Norman Lockyer, Director of the Observatory (1885-1913), and Sir William Abney.

In taking leave of the Solar Physics Observatory, South Kensington, we can but express hopes for the success of both the institutions that may be said to have sprung from it. Not only from its direct successor, the Solar Physics Observatory at Cambridge, but also from the Hill Observatory at Sidmouth, do we hope to see work which shall maintain the position won for England in the past by her distinguished investigators of solar and allied problems.

MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOLAR UNION.

THE Triennial Conference of the International Union for Solar Research took place this year at Bonn from July 30 to August 5. The meetings were held, by the invitation of Prof. H. Kayser, at the Physikalisches Institut, a place naturally of great interest to spectroscopists and rendered historically interesting to other physicists by its association with Clausius and Hertz. The chairmen at the successive meetings were Profs. Kayser, Küstner, Schwarzschild, Runge, and E. Pringsheim, and the Secretaries were Prof. Konen, Dr. Hemsalech, M. le Comte de la Baume Pluvinel, and Prof. Fowler. In the regrettable absence through ill-health of Dr. Schuster, Prof. Turner acted as Chairman of the Executive Committee. There was a good attendance of astronomers from all over the world, although unfortunately several prominent members of the Union were unable to be present.

In a sense their absence robbed the business side of the meeting of a good part of its value, for in the reports and recommendations of the various committees of the Union lies the most valuable part of its work; and of one of the important committees appointed at the last meeting only one member was present throughout the meeting and a second member for part of the time only. As one of the chief controversies of the meeting arose on the report of this committee, the question of the best method of conducting the business of an International Union became necessarily rather prominent. At the final business meeting the feeling that all was not perfect in the organisation of the committees took shape in several resolutions that will be referred to later. One point, however, was not discussed, though it may seem worthy of consideration by the executive committee. It would seem to be worth while to give to the chairman of a committee or his deputy power to co-opt for the time of a meeting members from among those present. Thus full use could be made of the gathering together of experts interested in special points, without the permanent committees being made unwieldy for the purposes of consultation between the meetings. This is much