

GENERAL NOTES

Probleme Der Astronomie,¹ *Festschrift für H. v Seeliger (A Review)*:—Only a few months before his death, Prof. Seeliger, for forty-two years director of the Munich Observatory, celebrated his seventy-fifth birthday anniversary. It was for this occasion that the present volume was prepared and it was offered to him by fellow astronomers, friends, and former pupils as a tribute to his successful lifework of astronomical research and teaching.

According to its dedicatory purpose the book is a somewhat heterogeneous collection of 36 articles collected under the editorship of H. Kienle (Göttingen) and filling a handsome well printed and illustrated volume of 475 pages. The contributors, mostly distinguished astronomers, represent ten different countries, though German and Austrian astronomers are naturally in the majority. Three of the contributions are from the United States, one from Canada. The international character of the book is further emphasized by the fact that all articles are published in their original language (six in English). "Problems of Astronomy" seems quite an appropriate title for such a collection and the many subjects treated cover nearly every field of astronomical work. It would, however, be quite erroneous to infer that all the contributions have the character of an original research publication on a specialized or technical problem, like the papers found in scientific journals. It may be considered as a special merit of the book, that it also contains a number of articles aiming rather at a broad, non-technical, summary or review of the results and experiences gained in a certain line of work. These latter contributions should appeal not only to the professional astronomer but to a wider circle of readers and will, undoubtedly, be of interest to the members of our Society.

In this class belongs the discourse of Jeans, developing his ideas about the origin of the solar system, and Eddington's article summarizing his remarkable work on the interior of a

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star. J. S. Plaskett gives an excellent outline of the difficult problems connected with the O type stars; Shapley makes a short statement about our present knowledge of the Magellanic Clouds; while Schlesinger describes the trigonometric method for determining stellar distances to which he has contributed so much. A critical examination of the present data on proper motions of stars is found in an article by E. Grossmann; and Guthnick relates the experiences and results of the photo-electric work at the Berlin-Babelsberg Observatory. An investigation of the dark lanes of the Milky Way near S *Monocerotis* by M. Wolf of Heidelberg is accompanied by large photographic reproductions of this region; by means of star counts some information is gained about the nebular material which causes these dark lanes. Bottlinger shows how the linear diameters of stars can be calculated from color-indices (temperatures) and parallax measures under the assumption of black body radiation. An interesting diagram representing the frequencies of stars for different spectral classes and absolute magnitudes is given by R. Hess; it should replace the simple form of the luminosity law formerly used in stellar statistics.

These are only a few samples of this unusually rich collection of astronomical thought and work which forms indeed a beautiful monument to the man to whom it is dedicated.

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The Earth and the Stars,¹ by Charles G. Abbot (*A Review*): —It is a matter of common observation that astronomy of all the sciences makes the greatest appeal to the so-called “man in the street.” He is always eager to learn “the latest news from the stars” and is ready to accept it although unfortunately at times the source of his information is none too trustworthy. During the past decade, the story of the heavens has been growing by leaps and bounds as a result of the remarkable advances made in our knowledge of the stars, and the materials of which they are composed; and there consequently has been an urgent

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