

PART IV
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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July 12, 1928

The General Assembly met in the Stadsgehoorzaal on Thursday, July 12, at 13.30, President de Sitter in the chair.

Professor van Rhijn called the attention of the meeting to the "Life of Kapteyn," by his daughter, which had just been published.

The President reported that information had been received that Roumania had adhered to the International Research Council and the International Astronomical Union, and in the name of the Union he welcomed Roumania heartily as a new member of their body. He regretted to inform the meeting that he had heard through M. Bigourdan that Professor Aiginitis, who was to have represented Greece at the meeting, was absent through illness contracted while on his way from Athens to attend the meeting. He was sure that the Union would join him in expressing hope for Professor Aiginitis' early and complete recovery.

Professor Chant then read the report of the Finance Committee as follows:

Report of the Finance Committee

(1) The accounts of the General Secretary for the years 1925, 1926, 1927 have been audited by Dr Jackson, Professor Nijland and Professor Rosseland, who have submitted the following report:

As auditors of the accounts we have examined the vouchers for expenditure, the bank-books and other details of income and expenditure for the years 1925, 1926 and 1927, and we have to report that we have found the statements printed by the executive committee to be correct. The balance carried forward from December 31, 1927, was £1172. 0s. 1½d. as compared with £1778. 13s. 1½d. on January 1, 1925.

We suggest that in future an official receipt form be printed for use by all who receive money from the funds of the union. Our thanks are due to Col. Stratton for the assistance he has given us in carrying out our duties.

J. JACKSON.
S. ROSSELAND.
A. A. NIJLAND.

(2) The Finance Committee had before them the following applications for grants approved by the Executive Committee for submission to the General Assembly:

| ANNUAL GRANTS | | | | | | | £ |
|---------------|-------------------|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| Commission 31 | Bureau de l'Heure | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 500 |
| " | 23 | Towards the printing of the <i>Carte du Ciel</i> | ... | ... | ... | ... | 300 |
| " | 19 | Bureau de la Variation des latitudes | ... | ... | ... | ... | 100 |
| " | 6 | Bureau des Télégrammes (commencing October 1929) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 66 |
| " | 12 | Cartes synoptiques de l'atmosphère supérieure du soleil (Paris-Meudon) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 125 |
| " | 12 | Immagini spettroscopiche del bordo solare (Arcetri) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 60 |
| | | Printing and Secretariat | ... | ... | ... | ... | 250 |
| | | | | | | | <u>£1401</u> |

| SPECIAL GRANTS | | | | | | | £ |
|----------------|-------------------|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------|
| Commission 31 | Bureau de l'Heure | (for accumulated debts) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 100 |
| " | 5 | Liste des observatoires et des astronomes (Uccle) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 90 |
| " | 17 | Nomenclature lunaire (photographs of definitive map) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 30 |
| | | | | | | | <u>£220</u> |

In addition there were other grants asked for on which the Executive Committee had not yet come to a definite decision: annual grants of the amount of £125, and special grants to the amount of £130.

An income of about £1600 a year had to be budgeted for and with 95 units available from the different countries it was clear that to fix the unit at about 450 francs-or would give an income of the right order.

(3) The Finance Committee by the affirmative vote of 18 countries (2 not voting) agreed to recommend for the years 1929, 1930, 1931, a unit of 450 gold francs (*i.e.* 2250 francs (Paris), 86.87 dollars (New York) or £17. 17s. sterling).

(4) It was also agreed that in future the balance in hand at the end of the period for which accounts are rendered should be given in francs-or as well as in pounds sterling.

On the proposal of Prof. Chant seconded by Dr Jackson the report of the Finance Committee was adopted.

The reports of the different commissions were next considered, precedence being given to those commissions whose chairmen had to leave Leiden before the final meeting.

Dr Hubble presented the report of Commission 28. Dr Knox-Shaw had acted as Secretary. No resolutions had been passed for submission to the General Assembly but their efforts had been concentrated upon completing various schemes for co-operation. There were too many gaps in the data for proper statistical work or a new catalogue. They were starting a photographic survey down to the fourteenth magnitude and hoped to secure data on the fainter nebulae for statistical purposes. The work would be put in hand as early as possible. The Committee had not adopted the resolution referred to them by the General Assembly. The report was adopted.

Prof. Russell presented the report of Commission 29. Dr Luyten had acted as Secretary. The preliminary informative part of the report had been modified, paragraphs 1, 2 on p. 164 being replaced by a paragraph prepared at Harvard

dealing with the physical classification of spectra. This part of the report was merely a series of statements published for the information of members; it did not commit the Union. The technical recommendations and suggestions at the end of the report had been adopted with certain important amendments (see p. 252). These resolutions as amended were submitted to the Assembly and adopted.

In addition the Commission submitted the two following resolutions:

(1) The Commission calls attention to the important developments in spectrophotometry, both of the continuous spectrum and of line spectra, and recommends it to the attention of those working on stellar spectra. This was adopted.

(2) The Commission recommends unanimously that its name be changed to that of "Commission on Stellar Spectra."

The President stated that this question of the change of name was one for the Executive Committee and they approved it unanimously. The resolution was adopted.

The President then stated that Sir Frank Dyson had to be absent on the following day to represent the Union at the meeting of the International Research Council at Brussels. He had some important views to put before the meeting concerning the report of Commission 31. This report had not yet reached the Executive Committee and so could not be discussed that day, but he would ask members to remember Sir Frank Dyson's statement at the meeting on the following day.

Sir Frank Dyson reminded the Assembly that since the time signals were first started there had been considerable changes and developments and he thought that the time had come when the functions of the Commission de l'Heure might be restricted. The Commission should concern itself in his view only with the reception and discussion of signals received from different stations. The accurate determination of time and the transmission of signals from the French observatories should now be left to the French authorities.

The President stated that in preparation for the discussion on the following day the Executive Committee had formulated a motion as follows: "The Executive Committee express the hope that until the termination of the present convention (Dec. 31, 1931) the direction of the Bureau de l'Heure may be undertaken by the Director of the Paris Observatory and that after that date the present activities of the Bureau may be continued without drawing upon the limited funds of the Union, perhaps with the co-operation of observatories and other institutions."

Prof. Stroobant presented the report of Commission 5. Prof. Mascart had acted as Secretary. The report took the form of a number of resolutions (see pp. 38 and 300). Prof. Russell pointed out with reference to resolution 1 (p. 300) that some short abbreviations were so well known and strongly established that they ought to be retained. If the list was to be regarded as definitive he would have to object to the resolution, but if it was meant as an indication and suggestion only he would raise no objection. Dr Jackson asked to have the abbreviation for *astrolologique* removed from the list. The resolution was adopted as a general recommendation. Resolutions 2, 3 (slightly amended) and 4 were adopted without comment. On resolution 5 the President noted that this was a double resolution, a vote of thanks to the Observatoire de Lyon and to all other workers in bibliography. Resolution 6 was adopted, as also resolution 7 as amended (p. 301) and resolutions 8 and 9, involving grants of £100 to Prof. Mascart and £90 to

Prof. Stroobant. Resolution 10 was opposed by the General Secretary on the ground of expense. The list as drawn up was too long and in large part not of such especial interest to the Union as to justify the expense involved in printing it. Prof. Mascart said that hitherto the expense had been borne by himself but that he felt it necessary now to transfer any further burden to the Union. He had tried to reduce the list but astronomy now had such a wide range of contacts with other subjects that reduction had proved impossible in practice. The President pointed out that the resources of the Union were limited and that as it was we had had to increase the unit of contribution. He was unable to see the need of printing a complete list of abbreviations of scientific journals. They would all appreciate the work that Prof. Mascart had done in the matter. Prof. Mascart said that he could not insist on publication. Prof. Russell pointed out that the proposition referred to printing what was really a temporary provisional list. There were cheaper methods of reproduction which might meet all the needs of the case. He moved that the resolution be referred to the Executive Committee. This was agreed to. Prof. Turner described resolution 11 as superfluous and it was withdrawn. Baron de Vos van Steenwijk explained that the resolution about international co-operation was put forward with a view to maintaining touch with what was being done in the other sciences in regard to such special difficulties as arose over the more isolated languages such as Japanese, Russian, etc. Prof. Andoyer questioned the usefulness of the resolution. Prof. Mascart said that it would be helpful to authorize the Commission to enter into relations as a commission with the competent international bodies. The resolution was adopted.

Prof. Eichelberger presented the report of Commission 4. Dr Jackson had acted as Secretary. Two proposals as to time had been referred to the Commission and they had drawn up the printed resolution before the meeting (p. 300 (1)). A further resolution about the letters G.M.T. had been drawn up and signed by all the members of the Commission present at Leiden and this also he would submit to the General Assembly. Both resolutions were adopted.

Dr St John presented the report of Commission 12. Prof. Abetti, Mr Butler and Dr Minnaert had acted as Secretaries. The Commission had been asked at Cambridge to decide upon a daily index of solar activity. After a discussion with the Committee of the International Research Council on Solar and Terrestrial Relationships a working definition had been drawn up and adopted. The necessary funds for the observations would be found by the International Research Council. A number of resolutions had been brought forward by the eclipse centre. These had been adopted except one with regard to standard lenses which had been withdrawn. To examine the material which should be furnished to the theoretical workers they had had a very useful discussion opened by Prof. Milne and it might be well to start a new centre inside the Commission on the solar atmosphere. The resolutions apart from those involving money grants were agreed to *en bloc*. Grants of £125 a year to the Paris-Meudon Observatory and £60 a year to Arcetri, for the next three years, in continuation of previous grants, were agreed to.

Prof. Newall presented the report of Commission 15. Mr Evershed had acted as Secretary. The Commission's report ended with the same resolutions as in the previous report and it had been adopted as it stood. With regard to the resolution (o) (p. 14) referred to Commissions 15 and 12 they concurred with the resolution (8) adopted by Commission 12 (p. 302).

Prof. Kimura presented the report of Commission 19. Dr Luyten had acted

as Secretary. Two resolutions urging the establishment of additional latitude observations in the southern hemisphere and asking for the renewal of the grant of £100 a year for the years 1929, 1930, 1931 to the Commission were adopted. Prof. Kimura referred to the additional international latitude station to be established at Kitab near Samarcand in latitude 39° N. to start work towards the end of 1928 and also to the establishment of a new latitude station at Lembang in Java, 6° S., a station of especial interest as being near the equator. He hoped that new work in the southern hemisphere might be commenced during the next few years at the observatories of La Plata and Adelaide. They were at about 180° difference in longitude and in the same latitude. The report of the Commission was adopted.

The Assembly then adjourned to 10.00 on Friday, July 13.