

SCIENCE :

A WEEKLY RECORD OF SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS.

JOHN MICHELS, Editor.

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The International Electrical Exhibition at Paris was opened with much *éclat* on the 10th instant by the President of the French Republic.

The brief telegraphic dispatches describing the event, all state that Edison's exhibit was the chief centre of attraction, and that great interest was shown for the forthcoming exhibition of certain novelties which he had sent. These appeared to prove that the energies of the great electrician were far from exhausted on this subject, and that his fertile brain is as active as ever.

We are promised a very detailed report of this exhibition, so defer particulars until it arrives. England and Germany occupy the largest space of the foreign countries represented, America and Belgium coming next in order. All the departments on the day of opening were incomplete, the Americans complaining much of the dilatory behavior of the French workmen, who seemed to have no idea of the value of time.

We presume that the object of exhibitions of this character is to stimulate those engaged in electrical investigations, and to form landmarks in the history of electrical progress. In that light the Exhibition has many advantages, but Edison appears to have suffered from his generous permission to permit all comers to inspect the progress of his inventions. Many misinterpreted what they saw, and came to false conclusions, while men of no mental endowment who were mere clever mechanics, assiduously appropriated the ideas of the man of brains, and have since produced barefaced copies. These men have so far proceeded unchecked, but the time appears to have arrived when Edison has decided to enforce with vigor all those patent rights which he has secured after so

many years of patient study and unremitting toil, involving the outlay of an immense amount of money.

The seizure of the "*Maxim*" electric lamps at the Paris International Exhibition appears to have been directed in consequence of such a decision, and we can assure Mr. Edison that the public will heartily sympathize with him in his attempt to enforce his just rights.

We are informed by cable that Sir George Biddell Airy has retired from the office of Astronomer Royal, and his successor appointed.

Sir George was born on the 27th of July, 1801, and was elected a Fellow of Trinity College in 1824. He commenced his career as a scientific teacher in 1826, when he was elected Lucasian Professor. In 1828 he was elected Plumian Professor, and entrusted with the management of the Observatory at Cambridge which had been just then erected and supplied with one of its instruments. On taking charge of the new Observatory he commenced a series of observations, but his able services there will be best remembered by the admirable methods he introduced in the calculations and observations, by which their utility was greatly increased.

Professor Airy had also the satisfaction of superintending the mounting of the Equatorial, the Mural Circle and the Northumberland Telescope (the last entirely from his own plans), at the Cambridge University.

In the autumn of 1835 the office of Astronomer Royal became vacant by the resignation of Mr. John Pond, and at the request of Lord Auckland, Airy received the appointment for this distinguished office, which he has since filled with so much benefit to science and honor to his country, for a period which has covered nearly half a century.

In 1833 he received the gold medal of the Royal Astronomical Society "for his discovery of the long Inequality of Venus and the Earth;" and again in 1846, for his "Reduction of the Observation of Planets made at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, from 1750 to 1830."

We have the pleasure of directing the attention of our subscribers to a very interesting work by A. B. Hervey, A. M., on "*Sea Mosses*," being both a collector's guide and an introduction to the Study of Marine Algæ. It is published by S. E. Cassino, of Boston. In another part of this issue will be found an extended extract from this book, giving Mr. Hervey's methods of collecting and preserving specimens, and the article will, doubtless, be read with interest at this season, when so many are at the seashore, with full opportunities for commencing the study of this department of Cryptogamic Botany.