

diamonds. Some of these crystals are more than half a millimeter in diameter.

J. L. H.

ASTRONOMICAL NOTES.

THE *Astronomische Nachrichten* of October 5 contains an extended article by Dr. Paul Harzer upon the influence of gravity on the circles of astronomical instruments. This subject, which was treated by Bessel in the last paper he ever wrote, seems to possess theoretical rather than practical interest.

THE Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg has published a careful investigation of the errors of a micrometric apparatus constructed for the Academy by the Messrs. Repsold. The apparatus is intended for the accurate measurement of astronomical photographs, and its investigation has been carried out at the Poulcova observatory by Messrs. Renz and Kostinsky.

THE Washburn Observatory has issued Vol. X., Part I of its publications. It contains Prof. Comstock's observations of double stars made between the years 1892 and 1896.

H. J.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

THE great physiologist, Dr. Moritz Schiff, professor at Geneva, died on October 6th.

DR. M. W. DROBISCH, professor of philosophy in the University of Leipzig, died on September 30th, at the advanced age of 94 years. Drobisch was one of the most eminent of Herbart's followers, and had made contributions to mathematics as well as to philosophy.

FRANÇOIS FELIX TISSERAND, director of the Paris Observatory, professor of astronomy in the Paris faculty of sciences, and member of the Institute, died from apoplexy at Paris on October 20th. Tisserand was born January 15, 1845. He was assistant in the Paris Observatory and was appointed director of the Observatory of Toulouse and professor in the faculty of sciences in that city in 1873. He was appointed first professor of mechanics at Paris, and later

professor of astronomy. He was made director of the Paris Observatory in 1892, in the place of the late Admiral Monchez.

THE Australian geologist, Baron Heinrich Freiherr von Foullon-Norbeeck, was killed on August 10th by natives on the island of Guadalcanara, one of the Solomon group. He had landed with a party from the German warship *Albatross*, to explore the mountains of the island, when the party was attacked and Foullon-Norbeeck, as well as three sailors and a guide, were killed. He was born in 1850, and was at the time of his death chief geologist of the geological bureau at Vienna.

DR. THEODORE MARBE, professor of zoology at Buda-Pesth, died on September 5th at the age of 80 years. He was known especially for histological researches on muscles and nerves, but had also made contributions to zoology, and had formed in the University at Buda-Pesth a laboratory of zoology and a museum of comparative anatomy.

BARON SIR FERDINAND VON MÜLLER, the eminent botanist, died at Melbourne on October 9th. From the London *Times* we take the following facts: Müller was born at Rostock in Germany, in June, 1825. He obtained a training in pharmacy and in his leisure time devoted himself to the study of botany and chemistry. In 1846-47 he studied at the University of Kiel, where he took the degree of Ph.D. For several years he investigated the botany of Schleswig and Holstein. In 1847, in order to counteract a hereditary tendency to phthisis, he emigrated to Australia, and at once entered upon those labors for the exploration and development of the continent which have only ceased with his death. From 1848 to 1852 he traveled over 4,000 miles, mainly for botanical purposes. In 1852 he was appointed government botanist to the colony of Victoria. In 1855-56 he accompanied as botanist the expedition under the command of A. C. Gregory for the exploration of north and central Australia, and was one of the four to reach Termination Lake, in central Australia. Some 6,000 miles of previously unknown land was traversed, and abundant collections made of the various forms of vegetation. On Müller's return to Melbourne he was