

SCIENCE

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FRIDAY, JUNE 23, 1899.

UNITED STATES NAVAL OBSERVATORY.

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ASTRONOMERS everywhere will be gratified by the announcement from Washington that Secretary Long has appointed a board to visit, examine and report upon the U. S. Naval Observatory. The work of this body will be of such far-reaching importance—perhaps determining the character of our government astronomy for fifty years to come—as to make it worthy of the serious consideration of the public. Whether it shall prove as nugatory as the efforts heretofore made to improve the administration must depend upon the wisdom with which the board executes its difficult and delicate task.

We believe a grave mistake will be made if the board confines itself to matters of detail and merely points out the features in which the administration can be improved. We have had plenty of such criticism in the past and always without any important result. The subject should be approached from a broader point of view, taking in its scope the whole history of the institution, past and prospective. What we are concerned with are the work and results of the most richly endowed and liberally supported astronomical observa-

¶MSS. intended for publication and books, etc., intended for review should be sent to the responsible editor, Professor J. McKeen Cattell, Garrison-on-Hudson N. Y.

ture of care and time. Still another point that should have been treated in greater detail is the use of the ortho-chromatic plate.

On such points as the last two mentioned there is a lack of practical information which will give the book less of a circulation than it should have and deserves to have on account of its many excellent qualities.

FRANK WALDO.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Man, Past and Present. A. H. KEANE. Cambridge University Press. 1899. Pp. xii + 584.

A Short History of Free Thought; Ancient and Modern. JOHN M. ROBERTSON. London, Swan, Sonnenschein & Co., Ltd.; New York, The Macmillan Company. 1899. Pp. xii + 446.

Vital Statistics. ARTHUR NEWSHOLME. London, Swan, Sonnenschein & Co.; New York, The Macmillan Company. 1899. Pp. xii + 353.

Handbook of British, Continental and Canadian Universities, with special mention of the Courses open to Women. ISABEL MADDISON. New York, The Macmillan Company. 1899. Pp. iv + 174.

SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIES.

THE SCIENCE CLUB OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN.

At the meeting of the Club held on May 12th papers were read by G. C. Comstock on 'Some Recent Applications of Photography to Astronomical Discovery' and by F. H. King on 'The Flow of Liquids through Porous Media.'

Officers for the ensuing year 1899-1900 were elected as follows: President, Mr. Charles B. Van Hise; Vice-President, Mr. Edward Kremers; Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. Charles F. Burgess.

On the evening of May 6th the Club gave a



MEDAL OF THE SCIENCE CLUB OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN.

Every-day Butterflies: A Group of Biographies. SAMUEL HUBBARD SCUDDER. Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin & Company. 1899. Pp. 386.

A Selected Biography of the Anthropology and Ethnology. WILLIAM Z. RIPLEY. Boston, Trustees of the Boston Public Library. 1899. Pp. 159.

Thatsachen und Auslegungen in Bezug auf Regeneration. AUGUST WEISMANN. Jena, Gustav Fischer. 1899. Pp. 31.

Traité élémentaire du mécanisme chimique fondée sur le thermodynamique. P. DUHEM. Paris, Hermann. 1899. Pp. 381.

dinner in the Madison Guild Hall in recognition of the election of its first President, Mr. George Cary Comstock, to the National Academy of Sciences, and the awarding of a medal to its second President, Mr. Stephen Moulton Babcock, by the Legislature of the State of Wisconsin.

On June 22d the first award of the Science Club Medal will be made to that member of the senior class of the University of Wisconsin who presents the best thesis giving the results of his own original investigation of a scientific