

# SCIENCE

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THE OBJECT OF ASTRONOMICAL AND  
MATHEMATICAL RESEARCH<sup>1</sup>

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DURING the first years in the life of the American Association for the Advancement of Science it was customary for the members to meet in much broader groups than they now do. As the membership grew and as the number of papers increased, it became necessary to divide the association into smaller and smaller groups. Section A as we now know it was organized in 1882. It was a happy circumstance that the plan adopted in that year did not separate the astronomer from the mathematician. For a time this section played a very important part in the history of American science; the meetings were well attended and both the mathematician and the astronomer contributed numerous and weighty papers. In more recent years our section has lost something of its former influence. The establishment, about twenty-five years ago, of what is now the American Mathematical Society did much to draw away the interest of mathematicians; and even of astronomers, for in the records of that society we find a goodly number of purely astronomical papers, and two of the earliest presidents were astronomers. Fifteen years ago what is now the American Astronomical Society was formed, and this has still further increased the separation between the two sciences. It seems a great pity that the two should so seldom find themselves together in the same room. The astronomer, in common with the physicist, the chemist and

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

<sup>1</sup> Address of the vice-president and chairman of Section A, Astronomy and Mathematics, American Association for the Advancement of Science, Philadelphia, December, 1914.