

## SCIENTIFIC EVENTS THE HERSCHEL CENTENARY

WILLIAM HERSCHEL died 1822 August 25. A hundred years later a party of Herschels of the third, fourth and fifth generations, astronomers and members of the Slough Urban Council made a pious pilgrimage to Upton Church, Slough, where he lies buried; and, after lunching together at the Crown Hotel, which once formed part of William Herschel's property, proceeded to Observatory House—in which two of his granddaughters still live,—where they saw many manuscripts and the other relics of the great astronomer. They saw, for instance, the copy of Locke "On the Human Understanding," the first English book he purchased in order to study our language; and they saw also Caroline Herschel's "Bills and Receipts of My Comets," which was her manner of labeling papers relating to her cometary discoveries; they saw a piece of the old 40-foot tube, and one of the 4-foot mirrors made for it, and discussed with Miss Herschel the possible whereabouts of the other mirror, which may be buried in the garden, and still to be excavated. It is wonderful to think how Herschel's work, old though it is, touches our modern work almost at every point. If we take the half-dozen great advances mentioned by Professor Eddington in his centenary address to the Royal, we are reminded by the measurements of stellar parallax how Herschel's attempts in this direction led to the recognition of binary stars; the discovery of Neptune depended essentially on Herschel's previous discovery of Uranus; one of the early uses made of the spectroscope was to confirm Herschel's view of the gaseous nature of nebulae; in photography the first glass negative was taken by his own son, and the subject was the scaffolding of his great 40-foot, and even in our modern advances the two-stream hypothesis is only a development of Herschel's investigation of the sun's movement among the stars; and the measurement of the disc of Betelgeuse reminds us not only of his careful scrutiny of objects for any signs of a disc, but of his investigations in optics and his splendid engineering work in the making of great telescopes. How he would have enjoyed himself in the great factory at Mt. Wilson, or discussing problems

of cosmogony with the mathematicians of to-day! Undoubtedly he was a great man, and it was fitting that his memory should be thus honored, so soon after the centenary of the society which had the honor of having him for its first president.—From an Oxford Notebook in *The Observatory*.

## AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

THE fortieth stated meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union will convene in Chicago, from October 24 to 26. The public meetings will be held in the lecture halls of the Field Museum of Natural History, from 10 A.M. until 4:30 P.M. each day.

The reading of papers will form a prominent feature of the meetings. All classes of members are earnestly requested to contribute, and to notify the secretary before October 15, as to the titles of their communications, and the length of time required for their presentation, so that a program for each day may be prepared in advance.

Business sessions will be held at the University Club of Chicago. Public sessions will be held in the Field Museum of Natural History, Roosevelt Road and Lake Michigan. Hotel headquarters will be at the Auditorium Hotel. According to custom, a dinner will be held on Wednesday evening, October 25, for fellows, members, associates and guests. Luncheon will be served daily at 1 P.M. in the museum, October 25, 26, 27. On Friday, October 28, an excursion will be conducted to the Indiana Sand Dunes, fifty miles southeast of Chicago. Particulars in regard to these features will be found at the registration desk on the opening day.

An exhibition of bird paintings and photographs will be held in connection with the meeting, to which every one is invited to contribute. Original paintings, drawings and sketches in color or black and white are desired, not only from the artists, themselves, but from owners who may be willing to loan them.

## PUBLIC LECTURES AT THE CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

THE California Academy of Sciences announces a course of six free public lectures on the general subject of "Science and Health," to