

SCIENCE

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FRIDAY, MAY 5, 1899.

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'OBSERVATIONS OF THE PLANET MARS.'*

THIS is the first volume of a series which promises to be important for the physical study of the planets. It contains a detailed account of the observations made on the planet Mars during an interval of ten months (June, 1894—March, 1895) by Mr. Percival Lowell and his two collaborators, W. H. Pickering and A. E. Douglass. The observatory, especially constructed near the small town of Flagstaff, occupies a central position in the great plateau of Arizona, at an elevation of 7,250 feet above the level of the sea, in latitude $35^{\circ} 11'$ and longitude $111^{\circ} 40'$ west of Greenwich. The choice of that location has been justified by the success attained. During the six months from June to November, 1894, the planet could be observed on nearly every day. On two days out of three it was possible to record useful observations of difficult objects. The atmospheric conditions prevailing during that period (and often during the following winter as well) are sufficiently characterized by the discovery of a great number of details unknown to previous observers. These observations suffice to give an idea of the optical perfection of the instrument employed, which had an objective by Brashear,

* Annals of the Lowell Observatory. Vol. I.—Observations of the Planet Mars during the opposition of 1894-95, made at Flagstaff, Arizona. Percival Lowell, Director of the Observatory. Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1898. Pp. xii + 392. Large quarto. Plates, xxi.