



EDITORIAL

The International Astronomical Union

At this time when most of the teaching staff and some of the students are attending the 14th General Assembly of the I.A.U. it is appropriate to say a few words about that organization.

The I.A.U. was founded in 1919, along with other scientific unions, at the Constitutive Assembly of the International Research Council at Brussels. It replaced and absorbed the International Union for Cooperation in Solar Research which had existed since 1904. Its purposes were "to facilitate relations between astronomers of different countries where international cooperation is necessary or useful" and "to promote the study of astronomy in all its departments." Assemblies have been held about every three years except for a hiatus during the war.

By 1922 when the first General Assembly was held (in Rome) there were 19 member countries of which Canada was one. Now there are over 40. There were originally 32 commissions, now there are 35, some new ones having been added and some old ones dropped. The most spectacular changes, however, have been in the number of persons' involved. In 1922 there were 207 members with 83 attending the Assembly; to indicate the rate of growth the corresponding numbers were in 1935, 496 and 317; in 1948, 611 and 279; in 1964 1630 and 1160. Sky and Telescope this month reports that close to 3000 astronomers are expected to attend the Assembly in Brighton. Many think that the I.A.U. has become too big to serve its purpose, but others point out that other Scientific Unions keep on operating with attendances of over 10,000.

Toronto has been reasonably well represented at I.A.U. Assemblies. Dr. Chant attended the 1928 Assembly in Leyden, the 1932 Assembly in Cambridge, Mass., and the 1935 Assembly in Paris. Dr. Fraank and Dr. Helen Hogg attended the 1938 Assembly in Stockholm, I attended the 1952 Assembly in Rome, and a number of us attended the 1955 Assembly in Dublin, the 1958 Assembly in Moscow, the 1961 Assembly in Berkeley, the 1964 Assembly in Hamburg and the 1967 Assembly in Prague. Attending this year's Brighton Assembly are Drs. MacRae, Hogg, Heard, van den Bergh, Fernie, Roeder, Anand, Clement, Garrison, Kronberg and Seaquist.

J.F.H.

#### COMINGS AND GOINGS

It has been mostly "Goings" as people have left for the I.A.U. and various associated activities in Europe (see Editorial). When they have returned we will chronicle their travels.

Dr. Hogg returned from Dunstable and has been nursing her broken ankle in the hope of being able to go to Brighton. She finally got away on Aug. 16.

Dr. Doug Hube had five nights observing on his binary program, and measured 44 spectrograms on a three-observatory (Radcliffe, D.A.O., D.D.O) program of comparison of results of B8-B9 radial velocity determination. It is interesting to see that even for these very broad-line stars the 12A/mm grating spectrograph seems to out-perform the lower-dispersion prism spectrograms.

#### SEMINARS

##### JULY

Added to Dr. van den Bergh's talk on "Old Stellar Populations in Galaxies" on July 28, was a brief report by Dr. Roeder on some recent results on the probability of screening by galaxies as a possible explanation of absorption lines in Q.S.O. spectra.

##### SEPTEMBER

Tuesday Sept. 22  
Countdown D.D.O.

Thomas Barnes "Near Infrared Photometry of  
Long-Period Variable Stars"

Monday Sept. 28  
McLennan 202

Dr. Richard Henry (M.A. 1962), Johns Hopkins  
University, "X-Ray Astronomy"

Tuesday Sept. 29  
D.D.O.

Dr. Henry "Ultra-Violet Astronomy"

#### CORRESPONDENCE

Dr. C.S. Beals, retired Dominion Astronomer, has written twice recently to comment on D.D.D.'s Editorials. Regarding the piece on Sir John McLennan in vol. 3, no. 3, he wrote in part:

*Your recent article on J.C. McLennan brought back some of my own experiences with him and I think you pretty well hit the nail on the head.*

*While it would probably be an over-statement to say that he was unpopular with his students, he leaned on them pretty hard and the pressure sometimes became a little difficult to endure. I recall in 1922 that he decided to go to England about the middle of the spring semester and remain there for the summer. For the last two weeks before his departure everyone was a bit nervous and edgy for fear he might not get off. The older ones cautioned the neophytes like myself not to do anything to rock the boat and cause him to change his mind. When it was finally realized not only that he was gone but that he wouldn't be back, the sense of relief amounted to ecstasy; joy was unrefined about the old lab and it was only after a few weeks that one became aware of something missing, like the engine in a car for example.*

Regarding the piece on Sidney Girling in vol. 2, no. 6 he wrote:

*...."One of the most civilized persons I know, with a touch of genius about him, Mr. Girling is richly deserving of the kind of recognition that your article gives. ...I was particularly impressed by your touches of humour and character-revealing detail ("the beautiful game fish of the Pacific"), all of which showed up Mr. Girling as the exceptional personality that he is.*

*"Actually (an unimportant detail) Girling joined the D.A.O. staff during J.A. Pearce's directorship (not J.S. Plaskett's as stated). Perhaps Plaskett's influence even from beyond had something to do with it.*