

(mag.=4.3), hidden from 10h. 7m. to 11h. 2m.; Alcyone (η Tauri, mag.=3.1), from 10h. 47m. to 11h. 25m.; Atlas (mag.=3.8), from 11h. 20m. to 12h. 9m. (midnight); and Pleione (mag.=5.2), from 11h. 26m. to 12h. 7m. Asterope, Taygeta, and Maia will not be occulted, and it will probably surprise many people to observe how much larger the Pleiades group apparently is than the moon; about one degree, or two lunar diameters, separate Atlas from Taygeta or Electra. Occultations of the Pleiades will also occur, in daylight in Great Britain, on July 28 and October 18.

PUBLICATIONS OF THE VIENNA OBSERVATORY.—We have received vols. xxi. and xxii. of the *Annalen der K.K. Universitäts-Sternwarte in Wien*, edited by Prof. Hepperger. The former contains the results secured with the 27-in. Grubb refractor during the period 1903-06, and deals with a great number of observations of planets, comets, and nebulae. The second volume is divided into two parts, the first dealing with planet and comet observations made with the 6-in. Fraunhofer refractor by Dr. J. Holetschek during 1903-10, and the second, by Dr. J. Rheden, giving an account of the observing station, and the observations made, at Sonnwendstein, from November, 1909, to 1910. The Sonnwendstein station is at an altitude of 1523 m., and the daily notes concerning the atmospheric conditions and their influence on the observations are of special interest.

ASTRONOMICAL YEAR-BOOKS.—"The Observer's Handbook for 1913," published by the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, is a very useful, though small, volume, which contains a great deal of information set out in a form most useful to the amateur astronomer. In addition to various ephemerides it gives the astronomical phenomena for each month, and a detailed summary of special stellar objects which are available for observation month by month. It also contains four very useful and clear star charts, covering the whole sky, and a brief account of "Recent Progress in Astronomy," written by Mr. W. E. Harper.

The *Annuario* of the National Observatory of Brazil contains the usual full complement of ephemerides and astronomical and physical tables. An interesting map is also included, showing the central lines of all the total eclipses of the sun visible in Brazil between the years 1912 and 2162, as prepared by Prof. D. Todd.

THE EUGENICS EDUCATION CONFERENCE.

THIS conference was organised by the Eugenics Education Society for the purpose of opening up discussion on the possibility and advisability of infusing the eugenic ideal into the minds of school children and on the best methods for so doing. More than 400 headmasters and headmistresses or their representatives assembled in the large hall of London University on March 1 to take part in the debate, and it is in some ways to be regretted that with so large and expert an audience the subject discussed should have been rather sexual hygiene than eugenics. The relation between the two subjects was so clearly and admirably pointed out by Major Darwin in his presidential address on the eugenic ideal, that it is difficult to understand why so many subsequent speakers should have appeared to regard them as identical.

The discussion at any rate had the merit of showing

ing how much the minds of the more earnest educationists are exercised in the question of instruction in sexual hygiene. The objections to its introduction into schools fall into three classes. In the first place it is maintained that the growing mind should be kept free from thoughts on sexual matters; to which it may be answered that practical experience shows this to be impossible. In private schools, attended by boys of nine to fourteen years of age, such subjects are certainly discussed, and it cannot be supposed that the pupils of corresponding ages in public elementary schools, with their ampler experience of the seamy side of life, are behindhand in this respect.

Secondly, there are many who say that it is practically impossible to introduce the subject in a fitting manner. These were answered by Mr. Badley, headmaster of Bedales, the well-known coeducational school, and by Miss Bonwick, headmistress of the Enfield Road Primary School, who each described their own methods. Miss Bonwick's speech is worthy of special mention, as her eloquence and enthusiasm made a marked impression on the audience. Prof. J. Arthur Thomson also dealt with this aspect of the subject clearly and wisely.

Thirdly, it is said that instruction as to sex should be given by the parents, to which it may be answered that in most cases the parents are quite unfit to give it.

Major Darwin, speaking in the name of the Eugenics Education Society, did not attempt to teach the teachers on these matters, but urged that in all institutions where sex hygiene is taught it should be taught in connection with the eugenic ideal. His address, together with those of the headmaster of Eton, the Principal of Bedford College, Prof. J. Arthur Thomson, and Mr. Badley, and the reports of other speeches, will be published in the April number of *The Eugenics Review*, and have therefore scarcely been touched on here. E. H. J. S.

NAPIER TERCENTENARY CELEBRATION.

IN the year 1614 John Napier, Baron of Merchiston, published his "Mirifici Logarithmorum Canonis Descriptio," a small quarto volume, the influence of which upon the development of mathematics, especially as an instrument of calculation, cannot be overestimated. The council of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, mindful of the greatness of the boon conferred on science by Napier's invention, convened a committee representative of some twenty societies, corporations, and institutions to discuss the proposal to hold a celebration in memory of the event. The universities and colleges of Scotland, the Faculty of Actuaries, the Edinburgh Mathematical Society, the Institute of Bankers, and other like bodies, also the Royal Society of London and the Royal Astronomical Society, were represented by delegates to the first meeting of the committee, which was held in the Royal Society Rooms, 22 George Street, Edinburgh, on Saturday, February 22. Mr. J. R. Findlay, one of the representatives of the Edinburgh Merchant Company, was voted to the chair.

Dr. Knott (general secretary, Royal Society of Edinburgh) and Dr. A. E. Sprague (Faculty of Actuaries) were appointed honorary secretaries in connection with the celebration, and Mr. Adam Tait, Royal Bank of Scotland, was appointed honorary treasurer. With these as officials, an executive committee was nominated to carry into effect the following resolutions:—

That a congress be held in the summer of 1914, to be opened by a public reception and an address by an