

spiculæ around the margin, but the margin was not so broad, nor so deep a red, as that seen by the same observers around Nova Persei in 1901. The image was, however, quite distinct in appearance from those of two other coloured stars,  $\alpha$  Ceti and Aldebaran, when the same optical means were employed.

THE INTERNATIONAL EROS CAMPAIGN.—After suffering numerous delays, Circular No. 12 of the International Astrographic Conference of July, 1900, has just been published by the French Academy of Sciences. It contains the results of some thousands of visual and photographic observations of the position of Eros during the favourable opposition of 1900-1 at eleven different observatories. The plates taken at the Upsala Observatory, and part of those taken at Minneapolis, have been reduced at the Paris Observatory, and, in order not to delay the publication of the collected results any longer, the work of the Algiers Observatory is omitted from the present Circular, to be published when ready by the Algiers authorities themselves. A collection of all the important documents relating to the orbit of Eros is included in the present publication.

MARS.—At the coming opposition, which will take place on July 6, the planet's southern hemisphere will be presented, and the apparent diameter will be  $22''.8$ , but, owing to the large southerly declination, the altitude of the planet as seen from Greenwich will be only  $10^\circ$ , therefore the observing conditions will be very poor.

CATALOGUE OF VARIABLE STARS.—The second Harvard catalogue of variable stars, compiled by Miss Cannon, appears as vol. lv., part i., of the Annals of the Astronomical Observatory of Harvard College. It contains all the known particulars of 1957 variable stars, and includes those found in globular clusters, but not those discovered in the Magellanic clouds. The latter number 1791, so that altogether there are now 3748 known variable stars, 2909 of which have been discovered at Harvard.

In addition to the tabulated data for each star, the present catalogue contains a valuable set of notes giving further particulars of numerous individual stars and a brief review of all previous catalogues which have appeared since Argelander published the first, including eighteen variables, in 1844.

ABBREVIATIONS FOR THE NAMES OF STAR CATALOGUES.—No. 4176 (May 14) of the *Astronomische Nachrichten* contains a useful list of abbreviations for star catalogues. The names of the numerous catalogues, to which frequent references are essential, are often lengthy, and different writers use different abbreviations. To obviate the consequent confusion, Dr. A. Auwers has compiled the present list, which includes all the important catalogues from Bailly's Flamsteed catalogue (abbreviated to B.Fl.) of 1690 up to the Greenwich second nine-year catalogue (9y<sub>2</sub>) of 1900.

THE NATAL OBSERVATORY.—The report of the Government astronomer of Natal, for the year 1906, is chiefly devoted to the publication of the meteorological results secured at various stations, as in previous years. Observations of the magnetic elements and the distribution of time signals were carried on as usual, and a number of observations of comet 1905c were made with the large equatorial telescope by Mr. Rendell, who, early this year, resigned the position of chief assistant to which he was appointed in March, 1903.

#### ANNIVERSARY MEETING OF THE LINNEAN SOCIETY.

THE Linnean Society of London, which may be said to have a preeminent position amongst the Linnean societies of the world as the faithful custodian of Linnæus's own library, manuscripts, herbarium, and other collections, along with many personal relics, holds annually its business meeting for the election of officers and the reception of the president's address on May 24, the reputed birthday of Linnæus.

In his presidential address at the meeting on Friday last, Prof. W. A. Herdman dealt with the special circum-

stances of this year, when the celebration of the 200th birthday of the illustrious Swede has been made the occasion of congratulatory meetings in Sweden and elsewhere throughout the civilised world wherever natural science is cultivated and the debt of the naturalist to Linnæus is gratefully acknowledged.

The Linnean Society has sent to Upsala and Stockholm as its representative on the occasion Mr. William Carruthers, F.R.S., a past-president who has made a special study of the work and the personal history and relics of Linnæus.

Mr. Carruthers, accompanied by the general secretary of the society, is now in Sweden, bearing to the ancient University of Upsala the society's Linnean gold medal, specially struck for the occasion, and conveying both to the University and to the Royal Academy of Sciences at Stockholm congratulatory documents, signed by the president and secretaries, and bearing the seal of the society.

At the conclusion of the section of his address dealing with the Linnean celebrations, the president moved that a telegram in the following terms be sent to the Rector Magnificus of the University of Upsala:—"Linnean Society of London assembled at anniversary meeting congratulates University of Upsala on historic Linnean celebration." The proposal was received with acclamation, and the telegram was dispatched forthwith from the meeting.

In further celebration of the occasion the Linnean Society proposes to hold a social gathering of the fellows and their friends, at the society's rooms in Burlington House, on the evening of June 7, when the society's Linnean relics will be on exhibition, and several short addresses on interesting recent discoveries in natural history will be given by fellows of the society.

#### THE JUBILEE OF THE SOCIÉTÉ CHIMIQUE DE FRANCE.

A NUMBER of scientific men from all parts of Europe met in Paris on May 16 and the two following days to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Société chimique de France. Founded by a few students for mutual instruction, the society is better known as the Société chimique de Paris, the change in name having taken place a short time ago. British chemists were well represented; Sir W. Ramsay and Dr. H. Brown came on behalf of the Chemical Society; Drs. Markel and Lewkowitsch and Mr. Walter F. Reid for the Society of Chemical Industry. Sir W. Perkin, Prof. Armstrong, and Mr. C. E. Groves were also present.

The proceedings commenced on May 16 in the amphitheatre of the École supérieure de Pharmacie in the Avenue de l'Observatoire. The chair was occupied by M. Bouveault, president of the Société chimique de France, who was supported by M. Reynal, representing the French Government. The president welcomed the guests in a short speech, after which Dr. Graebe, who, with Dr. Liebermann and Dr. von Martius, represented the Deutsche Chemische Gesellschaft, read a somewhat lengthy address in German, and made a short speech in French which was well received. A second German address was presented by Dr. von Martius on behalf of the Verein Deutscher Chemiker, after which Prof. Piutti, of Naples, made a sympathetic speech in Italian which was much applauded. Senator Paternó, also a polished orator, was to have represented Italian chemists, but was detained in Russia on a tariff mission. Sir William Ramsay next read and presented the address of the Chemical Society, saying at the same time a few appropriate words in French. Mr. Walter F. Reid then made a short French speech, and presented the congratulatory address of the Society of Chemical Industry. Other speakers followed representing Russia, Norway, Switzerland, and other countries, after which M. Reynal, representing the French Government, welcomed the foreign delegates and referred to the numerous services rendered to the State by chemists, especially in connection with hygiene, agriculture, and the detection of adulteration and of crime generally.

In the afternoon a special boat conveyed the delegates and many members of the French society to Sèvres, where