

and the National Trust has agreed to accept it for permanent preservation, provided that the funds necessary for its purchase can be raised and sufficient endowment secured for its maintenance. The property consists of "The Wakes", 27 acres of parkland, and eight contemporary cottages which add much to the beauty of Selborne. The purchase price is £12,000. It is intended to restore the house, so far as is practicable, to its original condition. The National Trust has made an estimate of the amount of endowment necessary to keep the restored "Wakes" in good repair, and these items amount together to £12,500. An appeal has now been launched for a total of £24,500. It is proposed that "The Wakes" should then be occupied by a custodian appointed by the National Trust, and—together with its gardens and park—be open to the public. It would become a local centre of natural history, and a museum of the personal effects of Gilbert White and of the antiquities of Selborne. In this connexion it may be mentioned that Dr. W. S. Scott has offered his extensive collection of manuscripts and books connected with White, and no doubt more objects of interest would be forthcoming. Donations should be sent to the Treasurer, National Provincial Bank, Ltd., Alton, Hants.

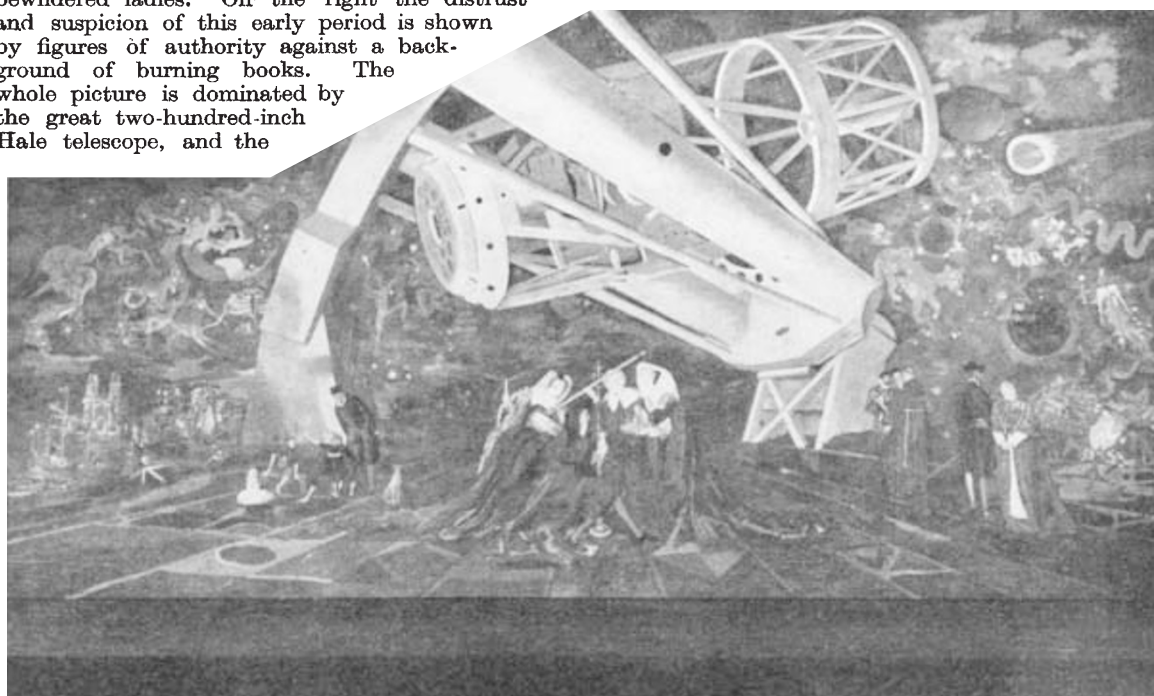
Astronomy Mural in the Science Museum, London

MR. A. R. THOMSON, R.A., has completed a painting on astronomy to decorate a wall in the entrance hall of the Science Museum, London, near the well-known Foucault pendulum. Mr. Thomson was given *carte blanche* to depict the subject of 'Astronomy', and he has chosen as his main theme the invention and development of the telescope. On the left the small sons of Dutch spectacle-makers are playing with combinations of pairs of lenses, while sailing ships in port in the background indicate the development of peaceful trade. In the centre of the picture Galileo is using his telescope, ministered to by three rather bewildered ladies. On the right the distrust and suspicion of this early period is shown by figures of authority against a background of burning books. The whole picture is dominated by the great two-hundred-inch Hale telescope, and the

sky behind is an animated representation of heavenly bodies among the figures of the constellations. The picture measures about 24 ft. by 15 ft., and its irregular shape was dictated by the shape of the wall to be filled.

Oil Pollution of the Sea

At the invitation of the United Kingdom Government, an international conference on the prevention of oil pollution of the sea was held in London during April 26–May 12 and attended by delegations and observers from forty-two Governments. At the conclusion of the conference a convention was agreed, the main provision of which is the prohibition of discharge of oil and oily mixtures in certain agreed zones. The convention applies to all registered seagoing ships except those which are for the time being used as naval auxiliaries, those under 500 tons, and those used as whalers. (In a resolution, however, it was recommended that the principles of the convention should be applied so far as is reasonable and practicable to the ships to which the Convention does not apply.) Tankers are prohibited from discharging oil and oily mixtures within the specified zones as soon as the convention comes into force, but for other ships it is stipulated that discharge shall be made so far as practicable from land, and after three years they are prohibited from discharging within specified zones (which differ slightly in extent from those laid down for tankers). Twelve months after the convention comes into force, all ships will be required to be fitted with devices to prevent the escape of fuel oil or heavy diesel oil into bilges unless there is an oil separator on board through which bilges can be passed before discharge into the sea, and three years after the convention comes into force the contracting Governments shall ensure the provision of adequate facilities for the reception of oil and oily waters at the main ports. Provision is made for dealing with contraventions, amendments,



Crown copyright reserved