

Obituary.

DR. COMMON.—We regret to have to notice the death of Andrew Ainslie Common, LL.D., F.R.S., F.R.A.S., which occurred very suddenly at his residence at Ealing on June 2. He was born at Newcastle-on-Tyne on the 7th of August 1841, and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society in 1876. The list of his contributions to their "Monthly Notices" is a long one, the first being a note on the Satellites of Mars and Saturn, which appeared in January 1878, the observations having been made with an 18-inch silvered glass reflector with powers 170 and 272. All Dr. Common's instruments were of his own construction (though the mirrors used in them were by Calver) and he greatly improved the art of astronomical photography, particularly as applied to the nebulae, obtaining in 1883 a splendid photograph of the great nebula in Orion, taken with a 3-foot reflector after an exposure of 37 minutes. It was especially on this account that the Gold Medal of the Society was awarded to him in 1884, the address being delivered by the late Mr. Stone, then Radcliffe Observer. Dr. Common was, himself, President of the Society in 1896-97, and in that capacity presented medals to Mr. Chandler and Prof. Barnard. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1885, and from 1888 to 1892 was joint editor with Prof. Turner, of the "Observatory." In 1896, he took part in the expedition to Norway to observe the Total Eclipse of the Sun, which was rendered abortive by the state of the sky on the momentous day. Of late years Dr. Common devoted some attention to effecting improvements in the sighting of guns. He was a Member of the Board of Visitors of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, and died only a few days before its last meeting.