

Obituary.

C. D. P. Davies.

We have to chronicle with regret the death of the Rev. C. D. P. Davies, an original member of the Association, the number of whom is still about 40, and one who has occupied the Presidential Chair. Probably it was the distance of his homes from London that prevented him being a perfectly regular attendant at the meetings of the Association, but his attendances were sufficiently frequent to make his striking personality familiar. To those who knew him in early years it was that of the young cleric keen on a hobby, and to a later generation as a presence that seemed almost episcopal.

It is not known how or when his interest in the science began, but he joined the Royal Astronomical Society in 1889 March, his proposer from personal knowledge being the Rev. Charles Pritchard, Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford. In 1895 he presented to the Society a Note on a suggested form of mounting for a (modified) Newtonian reflector (*Mon. Not.*, 55, 400), almost described by the explicit words of the title. He suggested a Newtonian telescope of a form such that the light from the object first fell on a flat, and was reflected to the concave mirror and that this telescope should be mounted with its length at right angles to the polar axis of an equatoreal; that the tube should, in fact, form the declination axis. He made no claim to originality so far as the telescope was concerned, for the optical scheme was, as was afterwards shown, 150 years old, but he put forward the method of mounting as a new idea. Curious to say, when the paper was read, Dr. Common, then the President of the Society, was able to say that he had anticipated Mr. Davies by a few months, and referred the latter to a publication which he (Mr. Davies) had not seen. That this early design for a telescope should have been unearthed by two people almost contemporaneously was considered of interest and creditable to all concerned. Four years later he brought before the Society a proposed plan for photographing the corona without an eclipse, its principle being essentially that of the occulting bar, but differing from others of the kind in that two telescopes were used and the instrument was in effect two telescopes, tandem, the hinder one looking at a total eclipse of the Sun in the focus of the foremost. Unfortunately, the results had to be considered of a negative character, but for this reason were considered worth being put on record. (*Mon. Not.*, 59, 158.)

Mr. Davies had at this time a small observatory, as he had until almost the end of his life, his principal instrument being a 4.3-inch Newtonian reflector with which he made occasional observations, but it is evident from the communications to the Royal Astronomical Society above mentioned, and from others to our *Journal*, that his inclination was rather to the mechanical side of the science, and about the year 1904 he took up the subject of mirror-grinding, induced thereto by reading a series of letters in the *English Mechanic*, and evidently gave the matter much thought, which resulted in a long article "On the Testing of Paraboloidal Mirrors," in *Mon. Not.*, 69 (1909). In the second of his Presidential Addresses to our Association (October 1926), he gave an interesting and valuable history of the making of mirrors for telescopes, in which he touched on this method of testing, as will be found by reference to the *Journal* of that date, which contains also a short but useful bibliography of the subject.

Charles Douglas Percy Davies, the son of Canon Charles Greenall Davies, was born at Tewkesbury Vicarage on 1856 September 12. He went to school at Cheltenham College and was afterwards Scholar of Pembroke College, Oxford. He was ordained at Lichfield in 1880, and held curacies at Whitchurch, Salop; Chaceley and Red Marley in the dioceses of Gloucester and Worcester, and from 1887 at Ringmer in Sussex, near Lewes. From 1892 to 1902 he was Rector of the combined parishes of East and North Marden, Sussex, near Chichester, and from 1902 to 1916, Rector of Fretherne, Gloucester. In the latter year he was transferred to Deane, near Basingstoke, where he remained as Rector until the end of his clerical career in 1927, when he resigned the living and made his home at Kemerton, near Tewkesbury, in order to be near the Abbey, so much associated with his early life, to which he was naturally greatly attached. Campanology was a second great interest in his life, and in the issue following his death the *Bell-Ringing Journal* said that "by his passing the exercise has not only lost an able and loyal servant but one of the greatest figures that has ever adorned its ranks." Whilst at Ringmer he married Miss Jessie Mudge, whose great-great-grandfather was Thomas Mudge, the famous chronometer maker of the latter half of the 18th century. His younger brother, John Mudge, F.R.S., was distinguished as an authority on mirror making, which seems a coincidence. Mr. Davies died on 1931 February 5, leaving a widow, two sons and two daughters and is buried at Tewkesbury in the Cloister Garth of the glorious Norman Abbey (whose restoration was begun by his Father in 1875) within sound of the beautiful peal of bells on which he learned to ring.

H. P. H.