

Obituary.

H. A. Lenehan, F.R.A.S.

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of Mr. Henry Alfred Lenehan, F.R.A.S., the Government Astronomer for New South Wales, who died very suddenly on the 2nd May 1908, at the age of 65 years. Towards the end of January 1908, Mr. Lenehan was struck down by a severe illness; he seemed to have recovered and was apparently in good health when, a few days before the end, he returned from a trip to Bathurst, and was about to resume his duties at the Sydney Observatory. At the time of his death he was at Normanhurst, near Sydney, with a friend and one of his sons, and was engaged in inspecting some of his land there. He was seen to suddenly falter and fall forward. It was at once clear that life had departed, the end being due to heart failure.

Mr. Lenehan was a native of New South Wales, and was the son of the late Mr. Andrew Lenehan, of Sydney. He was educated at Lyndhurst College, Sydney, and was appointed an assistant at the Sydney Observatory in 1870, when the staff of the institution consisted of only three officers. On three occasions, in 1875, 1877, and 1901, he was Acting Government Astronomer during the period of the late Mr. H. C. Russell's control, and again on the retirement of Mr. H. C. Russell. Last year he was appointed Government Astronomer, and filled the position at the time of his death. But he had a very short reign, only a few months, and had little time to advance the interests of astronomy. During this year the affairs at the Observatory were in a state of transition, the Meteorological Department was taken over by the Federal Government of Australia, the astronomical part remaining under the control of the State Government. However, owing to the exertions of Mr. Lenehan, the local Parliament voted 2,000*l.* for the purchase of a 15-in. equatorial by Sir H. Grubb of Dublin, and he was looking forward with intense interest to receiving it. Only twenty-four hours before his death he called on the writer to discuss the details of the new telescope and the work he intended to take up. But it was not to be.

Mr. Lenehan was in 1894 elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society; a member of the Royal Society of New South Wales, he was for many years on the Council, and in

1905-6 held the office of President. He was also a member (1895) of the British Astronomical Association, belonging to the New South Wales Branch. He was devoted to his science, and conscientiously filled the position he was called upon to occupy, and was at all times ready to impart his knowledge to others. Consequently he was extremely popular with all sections of the community, and the news of his death was received with general feelings of sorrow. For many years he resided at North Sydney, where he was widely known and esteemed. He leaves a widow and six children.

W. J. MACDONNELL.