REPORT ON THE NAVAL OBSERVATORY.

We print on another page of our present issue the report of the Board of Visitors to the Naval Observatory, made on October 2d. Most astronomers will, we believe, agree with us that the work of the Board has been well done in several vital points. It is true that many details are left to be settled and much friction may be produced in putting the plan into operation. But, in any case, much will have been gained. The good features of the report are these:

We have for the first time what may be called an official admission that the Observatory must be reorganized on a civilian basis, made under such auspices and in such a way as to command attention. In stating the case all disagreeable details are avoided and, so far as possible, conclusions are intimated rather than expressed. Yet every point is so stated that no mistake of interpretation by the careful reader is possible. The optimistic impression always so agreeable to entertain, that, however weak may have been the administration from time to time in the past, it is now all right, is guarded against by stating that the scope of the remarks is not limited to the present time, but covers almost the
Science 10 (256), 745-784.

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