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Science News

THE DEDICATION OF THE MCDONALD OBSERVATORY

Edited by Dr. OTTO STRUVE
DIRECTOR OF THE YERKES AND MCDONALD OBSERVATORIES

The dedication of the W. J. McDonald Observatory of the University of Texas, on Mount Locke, near Fort Davis, Texas, took place in the afternoon of Friday, May 5. More than 400 invited guests from all parts of the United States, from Canada, Mexico and some European countries were present on the observing floor of the 62-foot dome. The speakers were located on the observing bridge. Dr. Edward Randall, vice-chairman of the Board of Regents of the University of Texas, introduced the speakers.

The session was opened by Mr. C. J. Stilwell, president of the Warner and Swasey Company, who described the activities of his firm in the production of large telescopes and who formally turned over the keys of the dome to Dr. Otto Struve, director of the McDonald and Yerkes Observatories.

In accepting the observatory from the Warner and Swasey Company Dr. Struve spoke as follows:

The purpose of this observatory, in the words of the man whose name it bears, is "the study and promotion of the study of astronomical science." To promote the study of astronomical science means to discover the fundamental laws of nature which govern the structure of the material universe and the changes within it. It means that astronomers must not be passive observers of strange and unexplained phenomena in the cosmos but must be active and intelligent explorers of the vast unknown.

Mr. Stilwell, when I recommended in 1933 to the Board of Regents of the University of Texas that the contract for this observatory be awarded to the Warner and Swasey Company, I knew that your distinguished director of engineering, the late Mr. E. P. Burrell, would be able to meet the exacting specifications which our committee of astronomers had prepared. The telescope was not intended to be just one more expen-
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