SCIENCE


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* * MSS. intended for publication and books, etc., intended for review should be sent to the responsible editor, Professor J. McKeen Cattell, Garrison-on-Hudson, N. Y.

UNITED STATES NAVAL OBSERVATORY.

Astronomers everywhere will be gratified by the announcement from Washington that Secretary Long has appointed a board to visit, examine and report upon the U. S. Naval Observatory. The work of this body will be of such far-reaching importance—perhaps determining the character of our government astronomy for fifty years to come—as to make it worthy of the serious consideration of the public. Whether it shall prove as nugatory as the efforts heretofore made to improve the administration must depend upon the wisdom with which the board executes its difficult and delicate task.

We believe a grave mistake will be made if the board confines itself to matters of detail and merely points out the features in which the administration can be improved. We have had plenty of such criticism in the past and always without any important result. The subject should be approached from a broader point of view, taking in its scope the whole history of the institution, past and prospective. What we are concerned with are the work and results of the most richly endowed and liberally supported astronomical observa-