

SCIENCE

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THE NAVAL OBSERVATORY REPORT.

No excuse is necessary for devoting the space we do to this important paper in our present number. We include with it only such portions of the reports of departments as seem to be of general interest. Among these is the very business-like report of the National Almanac Office.

Readers who have followed the discussions of the organization of the observatory which have appeared in our columns during the past year will be interested in this branch of the subject. We trust they will bear with us if we describe the spirit in which we have endeavored to carry on the discussion. We have taken as a fundamental principle that our remarks should be based on official publications and that no heed should be given either to gossip about the interior affairs of the observatory, which circulates so freely, or to supposed leaks through unofficial channels.

The case as thus presented has seemed to us too serious to admit of our indulging in carping, fault-finding or minor criticisms, even had we been disposed to do so. As presented in the report of the board of visitors for 1900 it took the following form : Our government has for more than half