

has been established, so are they ready to follow the example ; and this fact leads us the more to expect that also this course will be adopted by the Washington Naval Observatory, as in the American Marine the Date-notation from midnight has been already accepted. It is only in the matter of the period, when the Date-notation, according to Universal Time, should be introduced into the publications of the observatories, that we feel inclined to recommend, that there should be delay until in this respect the most perfect possible understanding be attained by all astronomers, in order to avoid the much more critical disturbance in astronomical chronology which would arise, if the transition to the new Date-notation was not equally followed on all sides. We are desirous, accordingly, of suggesting a suitable time-point for the commencement of the year, for which the Nautical Almanac would inaugurate the changes corresponding to the requirements named. The latter has before been said could come to pass in the year 1890. We would, however, ourselves prefer the change to take place, in the first instance, with the change of the century. Until that date, it would probably be the simultaneous proceeding of all astronomers, with general consent to look forward to this period of transition, and it would more easily stamp itself on the memory of all who hereafter would be busied in investigations, in which exact chronology plays a part.

In conclusion, a circumstance may be mentioned which will be of interest to a wider circle of the public. In the Washington Conference it is true every resolution was avoided which could directly be considered as an influence on ordinary Time reckoning. But nevertheless an opportunity was offered to the Russian delegates to submit the principle and to recommend it for consideration that it certainly was desirable to introduce into ordinary Time-notation, as it is it would be also acceptable for Universal Time, to set aside the exceedingly embarrassing division of the day in two halves of 12 similarly-named hours, and in their place again introduce a continuous notation to 24 as has for some time already taken place in different countries. This idea has visibly fallen on ground well prepared to receive it, and already there is every prospect that the fruit will ripen. The instructions of the Astronomer Royal, which bear close relations to Universal Time, through the exhibition of the great clock of Greenwich Observatory divided into 24 hours in order to accustom the public of that country to the continuous hour notation for the entire day, has been greeted in the intelligent circles of England as it appears with enthusiasm as the simpler means of avoiding the so frequent matter of uncertainty whether forenoon or afternoon be meant. It is, perhaps, not quite easy to explain with any correctness, from what date and upon what grounds the present division of the day at noon into two equal parts is followed : especially as the ancient practice (for example with the Hebrews in antiquity) teaches us that the numbering the hours in one series practically offers no difficulty. At all events a