

sun. Indeed, we need go no farther back than to the first Herschel to find that the sun was then considered a solid body essentially like the earth, surrounded by luminous, light-giving clouds, and that the sun-spots were mountains on this huge globe sticking up their heads through the clouds. It was probably not until the discovery of spectrum analysis, little more than half a century ago, that the true nature of the sun began to be dimly realized. Just as in the study of the stars, the last decade or so has seen more real advances in the study of the constitution, structure and motions of the sidereal universe than all preceding time, so the last twenty years of solar research have been more fruitful in teaching us the nature of this dominant orb of our system than all the labors and speculations of earlier periods.

And yet, just as in sidereal astronomy the advances of the present would have been impossible without the patient and painstaking observations of past generations, so in solar research we owe more than is generally realised to those who have carefully observed and faithfully recorded the visible phenomena of the sun, who have attempted to correlate them with terrestrial phenomena and who have advanced hypotheses, no matter if mistaken, to account for the observed facts.

The importance of the problem of the constitution of the sun is being more and more realized not only by astronomers and scientists, but by representative governing bodies and the intelligent public as well. This is indicated by the formation, within the last ten years or so, of the International Union for Co-operation in Solar Research, an association of the prominent astronomers, physicists and other scientific men of the world, interested in solar research, with the purpose of intelligently co-ordinating and combining the energies of all institutions into the most profitable channels of attack, and of preventing useless duplication of work. This organization has already been of immense advantage in standardizing and systematizing the methods of research and arranging for co-operative work in the various problems. It forms an authoritative international body whose decisions on systems of units, nomenclature, etc., shall be