

As a consequence of these two considerations, I determined to use every possible effort towards obtaining a large reflecting telescope for the Dominion Astronomical Observatory, at least of 60-inch aperture, and if possible larger. Upon returning to Ottawa, I brought the matter to the attention of the Chief Astronomer, Dr. W. F. King, and, as in all attempts to increase the scope and usefulness of the work of the observatory, I found him most sympathetic and eager to advance the project by all means in his power. I can not refrain in this connection from paying a sincere tribute to his memory. No man could have a chief more considerate, more encouraging, more helpful in every way, and more willing and eager to see his staff make progress than I and all the observatory staff had in Dr. King, and his death was a great loss to the Astronomical Branch, to Canada and to the scientific world.

Nothing definite, however, was attempted at that time and it was not until the meeting of the Astronomical and Astrophysical Society of America, which was held in Ottawa in August, 1911, that the first step towards the initiation of the undertaking was made. When the report of the Committee on Co-operation in Radial Velocities was presented by me at the chairman's request, the question of further equipment for the carrying on of the work was introduced, and the President of the Society, Prof. E. C. Pickering, expressed a hope that the Government could be persuaded to provide a large telescope. Later a resolution was passed expressing the admiration of the society for the radial velocity work accomplished with the 15-inch telescope and expressing the hope that the Government would soon provide a larger telescope.

This resolution was transmitted to the then Minister of the Interior, the Hon. Frank Oliver, but, as this was just previous to the election of 1911, naturally no action was taken at that time. Further, owing to the change of Government and to further change of ministers in the Department of the Interior, from the Hon. Robert Rogers to the Hon. Dr. Roche, the resolution had become pigeon-holed and I felt that if anything was to be accomplished, the matter would have to be brought anew to the attention of the Government.

A suitable occasion arose at the meeting of the Royal Society of Canada in May, 1912, when a resolution was introduced in Section III (Mathematical, Physical and Chemical Sciences) and was passed at a general meeting of the society, instructing the council to prepare a memorial to the Government urging the providing of a large reflecting telescope for the extension of the radial velocity work of the observatory.

This memorial, accompanied by strong letters of commendation of the project from the most eminent astronomers of Europe and America, was presented to the Premier in July, 1912, on the eve of his departure for England, was very sympathetically received by him, and was presumably transmitted to the Hon. Dr. Roche, Minister of the Interior.

However, no action was taken at the time and it almost looked as if it would again be allowed to lapse. I am convinced from the support he gave later that the minister was favourably inclined towards the project, but did not wish to commit himself without feeling sure of definite support from his colleagues and fellow members. It seemed necessary, therefore, if the telescope was to be obtained, to interest members of Parliament and members of the Cabinet in the project sufficiently to have them urge its authorization on the minister. This work, I, with the help of Dr. King, undertook and finally a