

interfere with the system followed by astronomers. That astronomers would quietly remain in their old customs without grieving themselves as to the arrangement of a matter indifferent to them. At a period when everything tends to the simplification of reciprocal relationships, it must appear to us desirable that the numeration of date differing from the rest of the world, must also be abandoned by astronomers, and indeed for the greater reason, that in modern times the mission of many observatories is not simply to subserv scientific purposes, but also to unite with them matters of practical utility. The latter are thrown into active communication with the outer world, which, with a double notation of the date, would be much prejudiced. The sixth resolution of the Washington congress, with regard to Time Notation, unanimously voted, which expresses the hope that as soon as it appear practicable to carry out the principle, astronomers and navigators should introduce into their practice the principle of dating the day from midnight, carries this view. The Russian delegates joined in this strongly felt hope; although, in the instructions given to them, this question had not been mooted.

The seventh resolution, submitted according to the wish of Herr Janssen [recommendation, that the studies over the Decimal Division of Angles and Time should be resumed] intrinsically stands in no relationship with the propositions which were submitted to the Washington conference, and was from the first declared by the President as not coming within its powers. But a majority of those present, out of regard to the French delegates, and out of consideration for the indirect form in which the resolution was set forth, declared that it was permissible to vote upon it. Accordingly, without further discussion, it was almost unanimously accepted.

It is now asked by everybody, whether there is any prospect that the Washington Resolutions will come into operation, and by what means that result may be attained? In fact they are to be regarded principally as an authoritative expression of men enjoying public confidence in the different countries whose Governments in no way have pledged themselves unconditionally to accept the Resolutions and to give them the force of law. It, however, can be foreseen, that sustained by these important expressions of opinion, the logic of facts, and the necessity for the realization of these resolutions will possibly in no distant time lead to that result. Therefore, naturally it comes to be pre-eminently a duty for those who in the different countries are in the position to exercise influence in this direction, to make this influence felt in the sphere of their labours.

It may be considered as certain that the use of the Greenwich Meridian for Cartography and the numeration of Longitude will shortly, and without difficulties being created, be introduced into all countries. In this matter, the organs of the Governments of the three most widely extended countries, Russia, Great Britain, and the