

of that Congress or Comité Permanent would seek to be guided by his judgment towards the completion of the Astrographic Chart and Catalogue. He returned to the Cape in 1887 happy in the possession of his great heliometer and in the reflection that by the acclaim of the great astronomers of the world he had been assigned a position in the great astrographic work, and thus he realized a new feeling of power to do yet greater service. Next to his wife he loved his heliometer, and she records that when in his observatory after spending some hours with his second love, getting data for star distances, he would come into the house in the "wee sma' 'oors ayont the twal'" shouting and singing, and his wife recorded that he was just "daft laughing and joking and so it will be as long as his eye can look through a telescope." This practice would no doubt have been regarded as very objectionable and open to conjugal reproof by a less sympathetic wife, but it is doubtless more admirable to be uplifted with the joy of stellar parallaxes than to be lifted with that cheerfulness and alacrity of spirit that are derived from bottles taken from a cobwebbed cellar and the corks drawn out. The real character of a man is best known when he is off his guard and not posing under restraint or attitudinizing for effect upon the public, and thus it was with David Gill, the man as well as the astronomer. In the year 1900 he received from his sovereign the honour of knighthood, which he earned not only by eminent services to science, but by equally great services to the Empire in the South African War. The sound common sense even in political matters of this clear thinking Aberdonian and honorable patriotic Briton were of immense value to the administration of the South African government. Lord Milner and Sir David were close personal friends, and the Astronomer proved not only to be a mere academician but a valuable far-seeing adviser. On March 6th, 1900, he writes to a friend, "The time for three cheers and ten thousand hurrahs has come at last. Ladysmith relieved, Cronje and 4,000 of his men captured, and Kimberley open. It has been a terrible time of excitement. They all came into my room and some twenty-five of us drank the Queen's health and Roberts' and Kitchener's and Buller's and French's in my best champagne, and sang 'God Save the Queen'. I tried to make a speech and could not." An eye witness gives this account of his speech. "He rose to speak,