

THE PATENT ASTRONOMER.—Caroline Herschel, sister, and for a long time assistant, of the celebrated astronomer, Sir William Herschel, was born at Hanover on the 16th of March, 1750. She is herself distinguished for her astronomical researches, and particularly for the construction of a selenographical globe, giving in relief the surface of the moon. But it was her brother, Sir William Herschel, that the activity of her mind was awakened. From the first commencement of his astronomical pursuits, her assistance on both his daily labours and nightly watches was put in requisition; and found so useful, that on a removal to Datchet, and subsequently to Slough—he being then occupied with his reviews of the heavens and other researches—she performed the whole of the arduous and important duties of his astronomical assistant, not only reading the clocks, and noting down all the observations from dictation as an amanuensis, but subsequently executing the whole of the extensive and laborious numerical calculations necessary to render them available to science, as well as the multitudes of others relative to the various theoretical and experimental inquiry which, during his long and active career, he at any time engaged. For the performance of these duties, His Majesty, King George III, was pleased to place her in the receipt of a salary sufficient for her singularly moderate tastes and retired habits. Arduous, however, as these occupations must necessarily be, especially when it is considered that her brother's observations were always carried on (circumstances permitting) till daybreak, without regard to season, and indeed chiefly in the winter, they proved insufficient to exhaust her activity. In their intervals she found time both for actual astronomical observations of her own, and for the execution of more than one of the extent and utility. The observations here alluded to were made by a small Newtonian sweeper, constructed for her by her brother, with which, whenever his occasional absence, or any interruption to the regular course of his observations permitted, she searched the heavens for comets, and that so effectively as on more than eight several occasions to be rewarded by their discovery.—*Anna of Worth.*

A NEW BRITISH COLONY.—Many of our readers are probably unaware that a new colony has lately been added to the Queen's dominions. The island of Lagos, in the Bight of Benin, was formally ceded to the British Crown some months ago. It appears from the papers which have been published on the subject that this acquisition was made with reluctance by the Foreign Minister; and we are not surprised at this, considering the nature of the climate on the African coast, and the expense which we have already incurred in establishing and maintaining our various settlements in that quarter. There must therefore have been strong reasons to induce Earl Russell to extend our dominions in that portion of the globe. But circumstances, not theories, must be the guide of those who have the conduct of public affairs. The acquisition of Lagos is but the consequence of the policy which this country has long adopted with the view of suppressing on the one hand the traffic in slaves, and of encouraging on the other the growth of legitimate commerce. Our new colony is an island insignificant in point of size, but important both in a commercial and a political point of view. It is the port of Abbeokuta and the surrounding district, where cultivation and commerce are both steadily extending, and it is also in the immediate vicinity of the territory of the King of Dahomey, who is at the present time the most powerful patron of the slave trade. The importance of Lagos, therefore, is sufficiently obvious. Ten years ago it was the favourite haunt of the slave dealers in the Bight of Benin, and but for the efforts of this country it would doubtless have remained so till this day. Its annual exports now exceed in value a quarter of a million sterling, with the prospect of an indefinite increase. We may add, that before Earl Russell gave his consent to the occupation of the island, he had been for some time urged to accede to this step by the British residents there. The objects he had in view in at length acceding to it, we have already stated. The King of Lagos was at first exceedingly unwilling to renounce his sovereignty, although an ample equivalent was offered to him in the shape of a pension, together with the reservation of various of his royal rights. Nay, more, he afterwards represented in a