

**Robert T. A. Innes.**

DR R. T. A. INNES was born in Edinburgh in 1861. He showed early his interest in astronomy, and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society in 1879, when he was no more than eighteen years of age. Going to Australia while still a young man, his zeal for the science continued, and he showed by his own discoveries of double stars the immense field of unexplored work that the southern heavens contained. He attracted the notice of Gill, then in charge at the Cape, at whose invitation to a post in the Royal Observatory he came to South Africa. He remained at Cape Town until 1903, when on Gill's recommendation he was put in charge of the Observatory at Johannesburg, where he remained until his retirement in 1927. During that period he quite transformed the Observatory, which up till then had been little more than a meteorological station. Besides making good use of the instruments he found available, he acquired in succession, by gifts or government grants, important additions. The late Mr Franklin Adams, choosing Johannesburg for the site of his survey of the Southern skies, made a present of the instruments with which he executed it to the Observatory. The same donor made other important gifts also. The chief instrument of the Observatory is a 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch refractor by Grubb, long in construction and delivered only in 1925, but yet put to good and effective use. An instrument of which Innes early impressed the use was a "blink" comparator, for the discovery of exceptional objects upon a crowded photographic plate.

Innes's interests were by no means solely observational. He pursued theoretical researches too, including the rotation of the Earth, perturbational work, and Jupiter's satellites. He was in all respects an unconventional man, caring little whether his words or acts met with the approval of the powers that are supposed to be, provided that he was satisfied that what he said and did was accurate. Subsequent to his retirement, he came to the London district, where he died on March 13, 1933.

He was elected Fellow of the Society in 1904, and has contributed to our *Proceedings* (vols. xxvii and xlii, 1907 and 1922).

R. A. S.