

TRANSACTIONS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL
ASTRONOMICAL UNION

VOLUME VIII 1952

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF SCIENTIFIC UNIONS
INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL UNION
(UNION ASTRONOMIQUE INTERNATIONALE)

TRANSACTIONS
OF THE
INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL
UNION

Vol. VIII

EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HELD AT
ROME

4 SEPTEMBER to 13 SEPTEMBER 1952

EDITED BY

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(*General Secretary*)

PRINTED WITH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
FROM U.N.E.S.C.O.

CAMBRIDGE
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
1954

PUBLISHED BY
THE SYNDICS OF THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

London Office: Bentley House, N.W.1

American Branch: New York

Agents for Canada, India, and Pakistan: Macmillan

*Printed in Great Britain at the University Press, Cambridge
(Brooke Crutchley, University Printer)*

PREFACE

Most of the *Draft Reports* for the eighth General Assembly of the International Astronomical Union were received by the General Secretary early in 1951, the Assembly having been scheduled for the summer of that year. These manuscripts were prepared for the printer by Prof. B. Strömgren, but the printing was considerably delayed due to the postponement of the General Assembly until the summer of 1952. In September 1951 the undersigned was appointed Assistant General Secretary and at the request of Prof. Strömgren took charge of the organization of the eighth General Assembly and of the publication of the *Draft Reports*. Because of the postponement of the Assembly it seemed desirable to bring these *Draft Reports* up to date. Many Presidents prepared supplements and additions to their reports, which covered the publications and investigations of the year 1951, but which also have caused the reports in the present eighth volume of the *Transactions* to suffer some lack of continuity, and to be less homogeneous than in former volumes.

The arrangement of the new volume is the same as that of the last. Its number of pages however has substantially increased, and this not only in consequence of the elaborate reports on three symposia and on the combined meeting of Commissions 27 and 29 devoted to the spectra of variable stars. The General Assembly has now approved rules, given on p. 65 of this volume, which will promote a reduction in the size of the *Draft Reports* in the future.

The *Transactions* were in effect written by the Presidents of commissions, by the secretaries of meetings and by the speakers at symposia. I want to thank them all for their most efficient and pleasant co-operation in the preparation of this volume.

Prof. Danjon, Sir Harold Spencer Jones and Dr Delhaye have most kindly read several reports which needed correction in the French or English texts.

I am very grateful to Prof. Strömgren, who has initiated me so thoroughly in the intricate administration of the Union and who has always been ready to give me advice in a most friendly manner. Nearly the whole *Report of the Executive Committee, 1948-51*, has been prepared by him. Harmonious co-operation with Prof. Lindblad, and since September 1952 with Prof. Struve, has given me deep satisfaction and has lightened my task considerably.

I am very much obliged to the Cambridge University Press for the pains they have taken to give the present volume its customary excellent make-up.

P. TH. OOSTERHOFF
General Secretary

STERREWACHT
LEIDEN, NEDERLAND

November 1953

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