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(*General Secretary*)

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PREFACE

In editing the ninth volume of the *Transactions* my main aim has been to reduce its size and to make it available to astronomers in a considerably shorter time. Volumes 7 and 8 were ready for distribution about two years after the General Assemblies to which they were related, and the size of the last *Transactions* had become impracticably large and rather too expensive. If I have succeeded in accomplishing this aim, it should be realized that it was possible only through the active co-operation of everyone who contributed to the present volume.

The arrangement of this new volume is very much the same as that of the preceding volumes, with one exception. This time, the reports on the symposia which were organized in connexion with the ninth General Assembly have not been included in the *Transactions*. They will be printed as separate booklets in the new I.A.U. series on symposia. The symposia which are now being prepared for publication are:

Number 3, symposium on Non-stable Stars

Number 4, symposium on Radio-Astronomy

Number 5, symposium on A comparison of the large-scale structure of the Galactic System with that of other Stellar Systems.

Part IV of the present volume includes reports on the four Joint Discussions held during the Dublin meeting. The other sections are directly comparable with those in the eighth volume.

As editor I want to express my gratitude to a great many astronomers. In the very first place, to the former president of the I.A.U., Prof. O. Struve, and then to all presidents of commissions and speakers at joint discussions who have prepared reports for these *Transactions* and who have helped me to issue this volume at the earliest possible date. I am also much indebted to my secretary, Miss Splinter, for the great care with which she has read the proofs.

I am very much obliged to the Cambridge University Press for the excellent care they have taken in preparing this volume.

P. TH. OOSTERHOFF
General Secretary

STERREWACHT,
LEIDEN, NEDERLAND

February 1956

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