

REVIEWS

La planète Mars. By E. M. ANTONIADI. Paris: Librairie Scientifique, Hermann & Co., 1930. Pp. 240. 4°. Figs. 150. Pl. 10. Fr. 80.

In this volume Mr. Antoniadi has gathered the results of his studies on Mars with the 33-inch refractor (objective by the brothers Henry) of the Meudon Observatory near Paris. The author, who has been following the planet assiduously for many years as director of the Martian Section of the British Astronomical Association, attempts to contribute to the explanation of the Martian topography and physiography by coordinating his own results with those of previous and contemporary investigators.

In the first part of the book we find generalities about the planet. Being of Hellenic origin, the author, who has contributed a number of studies on early Greek astronomy, is well versed in the terminology of the ancients concerning the planet. Without transition the next chapter takes up the question of the best observing conditions and of the most suitable instruments for studying the planet. The advantage of large apertures in bringing out the fine details of the areographic markings is strongly emphasized. The author is known for his definite stand as a non-canalist, and his views on the presence or rather on the absence of canals on Mars are encountered all through the book.

The elements of the orbit (equinox 1920? not mentioned) of the rotation and the resulting seasons are tabulated in a third chapter, which would have come more logically ahead of the second. In connection with the first observation of the Martian phases by Galileo the rather startling assertion is found on page 13 that the telescope was invented by the Greek Zacharias Janssen of Middelburg.

The following chapters of the first section deal sketchily with the appearance and color of the dark and bright markings on the planet, with their seasonal changes and their probable origin. The "illusion" of the canals is dwelt upon more at length. On page 29 is found a striking illustration, on the one hand, of the curiously artificial aspect of the region Elysium as represented by Schiaparelli, with many straight and double canals, and, on the other hand, the same region resolved by the larger instrument in a world of complicated but natural-looking structure, which