

Astronomical Society of South Africa (Cape Centre)

Twenty-seventh Session.

Minutes of eighth Ordinary Meeting of the Session held at the Royal Observatory at 8.15 P.M. on Wednesday the 18th June 1941. Dr. Jackson presided. Only a few members were present. The minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 14th May 1941 were read and confirmed.

The Rev. B. H. C. Turvey, Box 36, Walvis Bay, S. W. Africa, pro. by Mr. Mezies sec. by Dr. Stoy, whose name had been considered by the Committee and passed for election, was unanimously elected a Member of the Society.

Dr. Jackson said that the present year had been a fruitful one as far as comets were concerned, and that Van Gent of the Union Observatory had recently discovered a Comet, which was of about the 9th magnitude. Mr. Forbes of Hermannus had written to say that he had located it by means of his reflecting telescope.

Dr. Young of the University of Cape Town delivered a most interesting and instructive lecture on "Mathematics and Astronomers". The lecturer said that in Astronomy, geometry came into its own. Astronomers used figures to obtain their results from observed data, while the mathematician of today was chiefly interested in the Theory of Numbers.

Although in the Theory of Numbers some apparently useless problems were solved, yet in the solution of these problems use was made of all manner of mathematical formulae and methods of analysis. The Bessel Functions were the work of a professional astronomer, and are often used in modern mathematical analysis.

Dr. Young referred to some unsolved mathematical problems, among them being the problem of three bodies, which was not capable of solution.

The meeting ended with a hearty vote of thanks to Dr. Young for his lecture.

13.8.41

H. W. Schoneveld
Chairman