

Astronomical Society of South Africa (Cape Centre)

Thirtieth Session

Minutes of sixth Ordinary Meeting of the Session, held at the Royal Observatory on Wednesday the 19th April 1944 at 8.15 P.M. Dr. Jackson presided. The attendance was good.

The Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on the 15th March 1944 were read and confirmed.

No further nominations were received.

It was decided that the meetings should begin at 7.45 P.M., until further notice, owing to the Bus Curfew.

Mr. Houghton gave a history of the determinations of the Solar Parallax, and said that the value of this constant had been thought to be much larger than it is until early in the 19th century, when the Nautical Almanac used 8.5", a value slightly too small. The work of Sir David Gill with the heliometer in determining the constant was mentioned. Mr. Hough and Dr. Halm had used the Radial Velocity method to determine the parallax, while Dr. Spencer Jones used the favourable opposition of ϵ Croc in 1931 for this purpose. The accepted value was now 8.790 ± 1 , as against the value used in Almanacs, of 8.80" of arc.

At the conclusion of the talk those present showed their appreciation in the usual manner.

A general discussion of the subject of the paper took place, in which Mr. Hirst, Dr. Gray and Dr. Jackson joined.

It was announced that Miss Flynn would speak at the May meeting on the Background and History of Ancient Astronomy.

This concluded the business for the evening.

R. H. Gray.

17-5-44.