REPORT OF AN EXCURSION TO GREENWICH PARK AND THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY.

SATURDAY, APRIL 6TH, 1918.

BY ARTHUR L. LEACH, F.G.S.

THE permission granted to visit the Royal Observatory, extended as a special concession to a party of 24 members, aroused great interest, and nearly 70 applications for tickets were made by members of the Association. The privilege was necessarily restricted to members only, and the cards of invitation were issued according to priority of application.

The party assembled at Greenwich Station at 2 p.m., and walked through Greenwich Park to observe some of the physical features and archæological remains preserved within the enclosure, noting amongst other points of interest the situation of the Park on the margin of the plateau of Blackheath pebble-beds; the great avenue of chestnuts planted in 1665-1666; the group of barrows, probably marking the site of a Saxon or Jutish burial ground; the ancient oak, "Queen Elizabeth's tree"; and the fragment of tessellated pavement discovered on the site of a Roman villa. The geology of the Park is described by Mr. T. V. Holmes in Mr. Webster's book (see references); the archæological remains are treated in the same book, and in the *Victoria History of Kent*.

At the Observatory the party were met, in the absence of the Astronomer Royal, by Mr. Davidson, and conducted to the original building erected for Flamsteed in the reign of Charles II., where a short account was given of the foundation and purpose of the institution. Three groups were then formed, and under the guidance of Messrs. Davidson, Witchell, and Acton, all members of the party visited in turn some of the principal astronomical buildings and inspected the instruments. Many interesting photographs and transparencies of sunspots, eclipses, comets, nebulae, the moon, etc., were also exhibited. The purposes and methods of using the various instruments were admirably explained by the guides, and nearly two hours were spent in a most interesting and instructive manner.

The President conveyed to the Messrs. Davidson, Witchell and Acton, the thanks of the party for the demonstrations they had given of the equipment and work of the Royal Observatory.

REFERENCE.

1902. WEBSTER, A. J.—"Greenwich Park: Its History and Associations."