

agreement, both as to the character and extent of the markings. I imagine that Professor Jacoby regards all the details that he himself sees on Mars as real, and not the product of his imagination, even though some of them might not be seen by others, less experienced than himself.

It seems to me very unfortunate that statements, such as those quoted above, should be made in a popular book by a professor of astronomy. They are in no way calculated to increase the confidence of the public in the value of astronomic study. Perhaps the writer did not mean them to be as far-reaching as they seem. Doubtless he merely overstated himself in a moment of temporary enthusiasm on the Martian question; for we find a few pages later the following quotation from Herschel: "I determined to accept nothing on faith, but to see with my own eyes what others had seen before me." Or was this quotation given to discredit Herschel's work?—plainly he had the avowed purpose to "see" what he was "told by others was visible."

I shall mention an instance in which the author puts particular value in negative evidence. Professor Campbell's observations are taken as conclusive that water vapor does not exist on Mars. Why make no mention even of the fact that Mr. Very's measures of Dr. V. M. Slipher's spectrograms, without exception, show that water vapor is present? They were made with the best of instruments and under the most favorable conditions.

It is significant that the book contains no copy of any of the many beautiful drawings of Mars that show the canals. Was it not safe to gratify the natural curiosity of the reader, and allow him to see how so many have pictured those strange products of their imagination?

K. P. WILLIAMS.

NOTES.

THE annual meeting of the American Mathematical Society will be held in New York City on January 1-2, 1915. At this meeting President E. B. VAN VLECK will deliver his Presidential Address, on "The role of the point set theory in geometry and dynamics." The Chicago meeting of the Society will be held on December 28-29. Section A of the