

on a donc

$$\frac{F + l_3}{l_3} = \frac{\alpha_B}{\alpha_A},$$

ou

$$l_3 = \frac{F}{\frac{\alpha_B}{\alpha_A} - 1}.$$

On connaît F de même que les coefficients de dilatation des métaux employés, on peut donc trouver l_3 .

ON THE HISTORY OF THE COPERNICAN MANUSCRIPT DE REVOLUTIONIBUS ORBIUM COELESTIUM

BY KAREL HUJER

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ABSTRACT

APPROACHING a half millenium of the birth of Nicholas Copernicus, an account is given of the events associated with the preservation of his famous manuscript, a document which influenced the development of astronomical thought. The exiled educator, Jan Amos Comenius, an ardent opponent of the Copernican system, was destined to own the manuscript for over a quarter of a century, carrying it on his wanderings through northern Europe during the turmoil of the Thirty Years War of Religion.

On the back page, Comenius recorded in his own hand that he had purchased the manuscript on January 17, 1614, from the widow of Jacob Christmann, Dean of the Faculty of Arts of Heidelberg University. At the age of 22, Comenius had registered at Heidelberg on June 19, 1613, and remained until 1614. He then returned to Moravia where he taught until 1618. Next he proceeded to Fulnek, in Germany, to become pastor of a Czech Brethren congregation and rector of a German school. The valuable manuscript evidently was taken with him.

When Fulnek was plundered by war in March 1622, Comenius left, taking the manuscript but depositing a major part of his library in the town hall. When the library was discovered by the anti-reformist, P. Bonaventura, it was publicly burned on May 6, 1623. It was assumed that the Copernican manuscript was thus destroyed and for two centuries was considered lost.

For the next six years, Comenius was in hiding in Moravia and northern

Bohemia, then retired to the Polish town of Leszno. A signature in the manuscript of Otto v. Nostitz, dated 1640, further establishes that Comenius was still in possession of the original Copernican document.

At that time Comenius was ardently preoccupied with a critical comparison of the geocentric and the heliocentric systems. The latter had few supporters on first publication and this continued throughout the seventeenth century. Comenius, while disputing its contents, valued the manuscript highly as an historical document and saved it a second time from flames in Leszno. He needed this work as source material when he wrote his *Astronomia ad Lumen Reformanda* in 1632 and, later, *Refutatio Astronomiae Copernicanae*.

In 1641, Comenius departed for England and did not return to Leszno until 1648. According to various pieces of evidence, it was before this departure that he disposed of the Copernican manuscript. Its location was unknown for a long period until its re-discovery in the Prague Nostitz Library was announced in 1873. Today, it can be studied in the Jagellonian Library of Cracow University in Cracow, Poland, loaned as a cultural treasure and owned by the Republic of Czechoslovakia.

LEONIDS—THEN AND NOW

BY PETER MILLMAN

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ABSTRACT

THE eye-witness accounts of the Leonid shower of 1833 were examined and compared with similar observations of the 1966 Leonid return in an attempt to derive the relative strengths of these two spectacular events.

CLASSIFICATION OF SOLAR PROMINENCES FOR SUN-SPOT CYCLE NO.19(1955–1964)

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ABSTRACT

THE areas and behaviour classifications of the prominences on the sun during solar cycle no. 19 were summarized, and a study was presented of the distribution of the various classes with solar latitude.