The Manila Observatory Expedition for the Total Eclipse of the Sun, May 9, 1929

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Originally, it had been intended that the Observatory expedition be concentrated entirely at Iloilo, P. I., but when it was learned that the Hamburg Observatory was willing to lend us a four meter camera with coelostat, and was actually sending them with the other instruments of their expedition, it was decided that confusion would be avoided if the writer would "pitch his tent" close to the Germans. Serious consideration was later given to the idea of separating from the Germans by about ten miles, in order to give a better chance for at least one of the expeditions to get something in the event of a small cloud obscuring the sun, but when Dr. Baade, of the German expedition, found that the clouds generally traveled in banks, it was concluded that this was hardly worth while, in view of the manifest advantages of companionship (and it may be added of expert advice for myself) accruing from joining forces. Hence we both encamped in the backyard of the public elementary school of Sogod, Cebu, about sixty kilometers north of the city of Cebu. As it was vacation time, we had the whole school to ourselves for our instruments, etc. The Germans also slept at the school, but my companion, Mr. Mariano Herrera, a faithful mechanic of the Observatory, and I, stayed at the parish house at Sogod, some two kilometers distant.

The weather for the two or three weeks preceding May 9th, was certainly good enough for putting our instruments into shape, as there was little rain; but the clouds were quite in evidence, especially in the part of the sky we were interested in. Two days before the eclipse would have been perfect for us, hardly a cloud in the sky. The next day was more misty. Rain that night would have cleared the air, but unfortunately no rain was forthcoming; hence eclipse day was cloudier yet. However, the sun shone brightly at first contact and for fully one hour afterwards, but with clouds near and growing, due perhaps to the cooling air condensing the latent moisture so prevalent in the tropical atmosphere. Cirrostratus of quite some thickness covered the sun at totality, and in fact hid the corona entirely for the last thirty seconds or so of totality. Only until our plates were developed did we know how seriously the clouds had interfered with our success.

But perhaps it would be better now to give the results for each of our instruments separately.

Seven meter camera: Our main camera, of which I took charge personally, was one of seven meters' focal length. The lens was a Zeiss photovisual (triplet), which, though ordered last August, only arrived the early part of April, too late to be given a preliminary trial at home. Fortunately the image of the sun it gave was of excellent qual-