



Solar researcher Father Richard Miller, left, with Father James Hennessey, Observatory Director, set 16" mirrors of the Coclostat as the start of their morning operation.

The Manila Observatory

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The world today, as never before in its history, has taken a profound interest in the environment of the earth. No longer are terms such as the *ionosphere*, the *geomagnetic field*, the *solar corona* relegated to the recesses of some esoteric scientific treatise. They appear in the daily communication media of the common man, for more and more people are eager to know about the space lying beyond the atmosphere men live in. This popular interest is the reflection of the active, growing effort among scientists to probe the regions of space. The result of this popular and especially, scientific ferment has become known as the "explosion of geophysics."

Significant impetus was given to the research aspects of geophysics by the world-wide cooperation known as the International Geophysical Year, IGY. Scientists from about seventy different countries participated in this gigantic collaborative task. So enthusiastic was the project that the scientists were reluctant to discontinue it after its period of eighteen months terminated at the close of 1958. In fact a comparable study is planned for the years 1964-65,

and this time is to be known as the International Quiet Sun Years. In all this activity the Manila Observatory is playing its role on the Philippine scene.

Recently at Loyola Heights a new complex of buildings for the Observatory was inaugurated. These functional structures have been designed for research and development in geophysics along with physical-science promotion. The Quezon City location will be the center as well for the analysis of data from the Observatory's other stations at Baguio and in the Southern Philippines.

The Manila Observatory is no recent arrival in Philippine science. Started very modestly in 1865 in the Walled City of Manila, it expanded under Padre Federico Faura, who lends his name to the street outside the Walls, so long occupied by the Observatory. For eighty years until 1945 the chief work of the Observatory was meteorology, the study of the weather. Under the Spanish and American regimes



Padre Federico Faura, Jesuit scholastic whose efforts initiated the first enduring Meteorological Observatory