



The Harvard Observatory.

WOMEN'S WORK AT THE HARVARD OBSERVATORY.

By Helen Leah Reed.

ASTRONOMERS have always welcomed to their ranks, women of genius like Caroline Herschell, Mary Somerville, and Maria Mitchell; and various European and American observatories have of late years employed not a few women computers. The Harvard College Observatory has been especially appreciative of the work of women; not only employing them as computers, but definitely encouraging them to undertake original research. Yet, although there is a field for woman's work in astrometry, the so-called old astronomy, with its problems relating to the positions and motions of the heavenly bodies, a much wider scope is offered for the work of woman in astrophysics, the so-called new astronomy. For in this latter branch of practical astronomy, photography is

now so largely used that the observer, magnifying glass in hand, can at any hour of the day study the photographic plate with results even more satisfactory than those formerly obtained by visual or telescopic observations at night. In the average observatory, where men are employed, it is obviously impracticable for women to engage in night observing. Photography as applied to astronomy has, therefore, greatly increased her opportunities for original research. Although in astrometry, photography has often been used to show the contact of an eclipse, or the transit of a planet, or to answer some similar purpose, its use in astrophysics is much more extensive. Yet, valuable as are the photographic records of solar and lunar surfaces, the photographic analyses of the stars in a group or of the con-