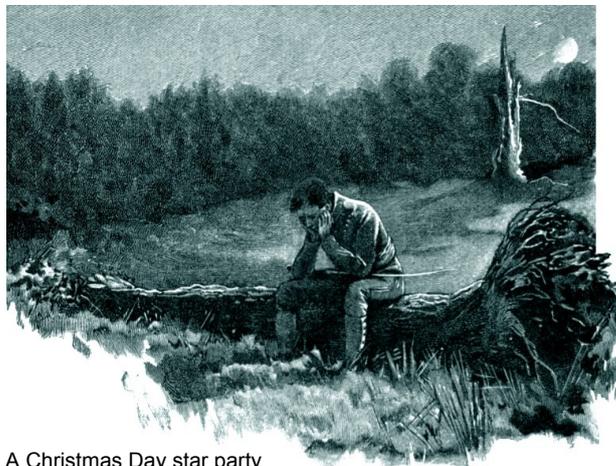




Welcome to the special Christmas edition of *I&I News*, published annually since last year. Will you be observing over Christmas? How dedicated an observer are you? On Christmas Day 1758, Johann Georg Palitzsch recovered Halley's comet; in 1942, Frank Knight recorded binocular observations of variable stars while serving with the British Eighth Army during the North African Campaign, and noted El Alamein in his observing log; and on Christmas Day 1980 Roy Panther discovered comet 1980u. But to what degree can dedication be sustained? Is it a desire for knowledge or a form of competition? Can it evolve into obsessive compulsive behaviour? Consider this. A letter is received: 'I am the King of Sweden, and I am pleased to tell you that you have been awarded the Nobel Prize for Everything.' Reply: 'Thanks, but I won't be at the ceremony if it's a clear night.'



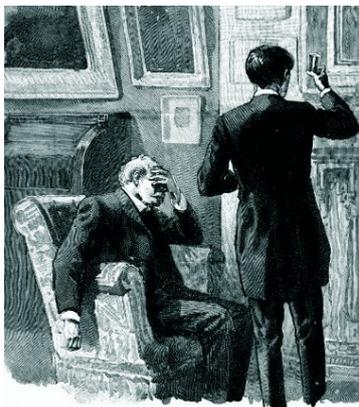
Bob Marriott, *Director*



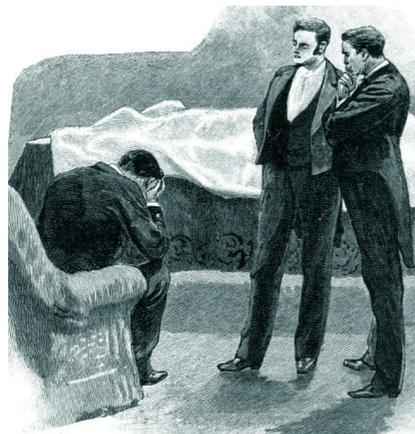
A Christmas Day star party



So, what have you been doing since you won the 'Astrophotographer of the Year' award?



Gor blimey! I've told you ten times... It's an eyepiece!



He can't get rid of the dewing in his SCT



It's an IAU telegram... You can name your asteroid!



... and if you let me build an observatory I'll buy you some washing-up gloves



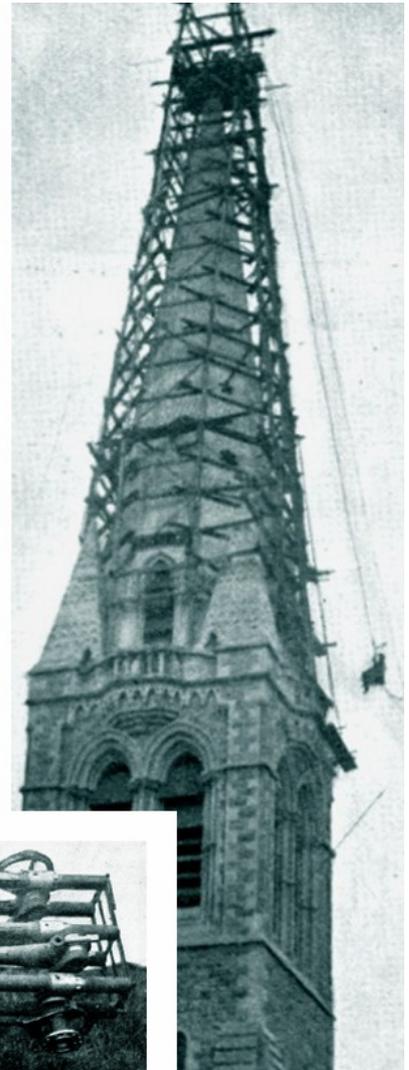
The new solar filter, available from Cheapskate Scientific Instrument Co



Public understanding of science – queuing for the toilets at Herstmonceux



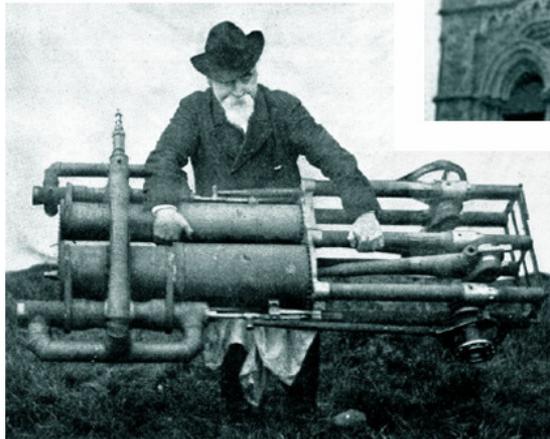
A BAA award recipient



A high-altitude observatory



Eclipse chasers approach the centre line



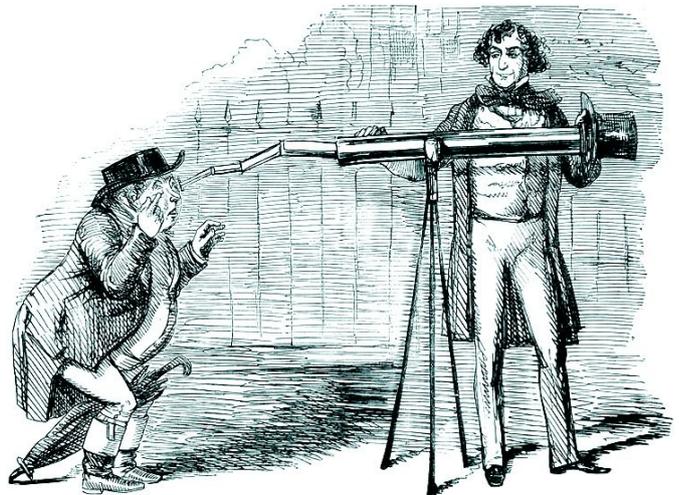
The new portable folding equatorial mount, ideal for use when on holiday



I thought Windolene would make the mirror nice and shiny



What?... Not you as well?



Mr Disraeli, in his address to the Electors of Buckinghamshire, had declared that it was the intention of Her Majesty's Ministers to do something in the future for the Agricultural Interest.

The cartoon above is shown with its original caption of 1852. Provide a new caption or captions relating to astronomy, and send your efforts to the Director. The name of the person who submits the poorest and least funny new caption will be publicised widely – the path to fame and glory.