

AN address delivered in the United States by Prof. Alex. Findlay, of the University of Aberdeen, entitled "The Appeal of Science to the Community," appears in *Science* of October 23. In spite of its immense utilitarian value to mankind, Prof. Findlay considers that the real claim of science to a fuller appreciation is for its idealistic aim, the seeking out of the truth. Prof. Findlay expresses disagreement with those who claim that, on account of the great benefits to be derived from the diffusion of scientific knowledge, men of science should have special power in the general government of the country.

APPLICATIONS are invited for the following appointments, on or before the dates mentioned:—Works chemist and organic chemist—Research Department, The Walpamur Co., Ltd., Darwen, Lancs. (December 15). Assistant at the Commonwealth of Australia Solar Observatory at Mount Stromlo—High Commissioner for Australia, Australia House, Strand, W.C.2 (December 18). Assistant engineer for the Timber Mechanics Section of the Forest Products

Research Laboratory, South Farnborough—Secretary, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, 16 Old Queen Street, S.W.1 (January 1). Senior agricultural officer for the Department of Agriculture, Nairobi—Private Secretary (Appointments), Colonial Office, 38 Old Queen Street, S.W.1 (January 31). Several men with training in experimental psychology—Secretary, National Institute of Industrial Psychology, 329 High Holborn, W.C.1.

ERRATA.—The writer of the article "Does the Solar Heat Stream Vary?" (*NATURE*, November 21) directs attention to two corrigenda. The quotation from Mr. Clayton on p. 755, col. 2, should read "These were supplemented by telegrams of the maximum temperature observed at Seattle, Williston, and Chicago, in order to ascertain to what extent the temperatures at those stations were responding to solar changes." It should have been stated at the top of col. 1, p. 756, that, with *uncorrelated* variables, the standard value of a correlation coefficient, computed from 84 samples, was about 0.11.

Our Astronomical Column.

COMETS.—Further observations of Van Biesbroeck's Comet on November 27 indicated that the R.A. of the Möller-Strömngren ephemeris was too small by 1 sec., and its declination too large by 0.7'; these discordances are small, and are in the direction of making the perihelion passage a day or two earlier than September 29, and the perihelion distance slightly greater than 1.447 units. The proximity of the moon has probably prevented later observations.

Comet Wilk-Peltier was observed at Greenwich on December 5 and 6; the approximate position on December 5^d 17^h 16^m U.T. was R.A. (1925.0) 19^h 29^m 59.7^s, N. Decl. 1° 21' 27". The comet was bright with decided central condensation, and was visible before twilight ended.

The following elements and ephemeris for 0^h are by Dr. A. C. D. Crommelin from observations extending to November 24:

T	1925 Dec. 7.2828 U.T.
ω	126° 22.35'
Ω	141 0.16
i	144 34.17
log q	9.88281.

	R.A.	S. Decl.	log Δ .
Dec. 10.	19 ^h 43 ^m 38 ^s	3° 26'	0.0373
14.	19 52 58	7 0	0.0851
18.	20 0 11	9 58	0.1271
22.	20 5 55	12 29	0.1640
26.	20 10 38	14 39	0.1961

The comet will be lost in the sun's rays after January 10 (about), but may still be within reach when it emerges.

TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE OF JANUARY 14, 1926.—The Einstein problem has practically monopolised the attention of British eclipse expeditions since the War. It is now considered that sufficient evidence has been obtained to verify the prediction of light-bending, and the observers are free to resume the spectroscopic study of the corona. An article in the *Observer* of December 6 refers to Prof. E. A. Milne's predictions as to the relative intensities of the lines in the coronal spectrum, made on the basis of Bohr's theory. Special endeavour will be made in Sumatra

to test these predictions. In addition to Mr. F. J. M. Stratton and Mr. C. R. Davidson, the party there will include Dr. F. W. Aston.

An article in *Science* for November 20 describes the programme of one of the American expeditions to Sumatra, consisting of Prof. H. T. Stetson of Harvard, Dr. W. W. Coblenz, Mr. W. Arnold and Mr. W. A. Spurr. They are taking a reflecting telescope of 20-inch aperture with radiometric and photometric accessories, and will make measurements of the coronal radiation by vacuum thermo-couples, and photometric studies of the colour and brightness of the corona by photographic methods; these will be in continuation of those made last January in Connecticut. This expedition, and that from Swarthmore College, will be located at Benkulen.

RECENT LARGE SUNSPOTS.—The last sunspot minimum occurred about the middle of 1923. Since that date, solar activity has been rising consistently, and for some months past the increase has been very marked. More recently, there have been three very large spot disturbances visible to the naked eye. Particulars of these are given briefly as follows:

Date on Disc (1925).	Central Meridian Passage (G.M.T.).	Latitude.	Area.
Oct. 14-26	Oct. 20.4	19° S.	1/900
Nov. 8-20	Nov. 13.6	15° S.	1/800
Nov. 18-30	Nov. 24.5	17° N.	1/650

(Areas are corrected for foreshortening and express the proportion of the sun's hemisphere.)

The first of these groups contained a large principal spot with smaller companions. The second consisted of a pair of large spots of remarkably rapid growth and decay, in the place occupied by a moderate spot disturbance in the previous rotation. The third group was a very large stream, some 17° of longitude in length. It was a conspicuous object through the mist and fog prevailing in London on several days towards the end of November, and it was picked up by several people previously unaware of its existence.

It is remarkable that no magnetic disturbances were recorded at Greenwich associated with the transit of these three large spot groups across the sun's disc.