

THE secretary of the Royal Horticultural Society reminds us that "Index Londinensis" has been prepared under the auspices of that Society. This was not mentioned in our note in the issue of Feb. 25, p. 296, referring to the publication. Messrs. Dulau and Co., Ltd., are now accepting subscriptions for the work.

APPLICATIONS are invited for the following appointments, on or before the dates mentioned:—A chemist for research work for the improvement of mine rescue breathing apparatus, a physiologist to assist in investigations regarding mine rescue breathing apparatus and methods of resuscitation, and an investigator for research work on mechanical appliances for use in mines, each under the Safety in Mines Research Board—The Under-Secretary for Mines, Establishment Branch, Mines Department, Dean Stanley Street, S.W.1 (Mar. 10). An assistant to the lecturer in systematic forest botany, and a herbarium assistant, at the Imperial Forestry Institute, University of Oxford—The Secretary, Imperial Forestry Institute, Oxford (Mar. 12). A research student for work on bulb-growing problems at the Royal Horticultural Society's Experimental Gardens—The Director, R.H.S. Gardens, Wisley, Ripley, Surrey (Mar. 13).

A bio-chemist at the Forest Research Institute, Dehra Dun, India—The Secretary to the High Commissioner for India, General Department, 42 Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.1 (Mar. 15). A reader in geography and education at Raffles College, Singapore—C.A. [T.], the Secretary, Board of Education, Whitehall, S.W.1; Scottish candidates, [T.], the Secretary, Scottish Education Department, Whitehall, S.W.1 (Mar. 17). Junior assistants at the National Physical Laboratory—The Director, National Physical Laboratory, Teddington (Mar. 17). A full-time lecturer in chemistry at the Chelsea Polytechnic—The Secretary, Chelsea Polytechnic, Manresa Road, S.W.3 (Mar. 24). A lecturer in geography in the Durham Colleges, University of Durham—The Secretary to the Council of the Durham Colleges, 38 North Bailey, Durham (Mar. 31). A lecturer or an assistant lecturer in zoology in the University of Bristol—The Registrar, The University, Bristol (April 14). A principal of Chelsea Polytechnic—The Secretary, Chelsea Polytechnic, Manresa Road, S.W.3 (April 30). A handicraft teacher for woodwork and light metal work under the Leicestershire County Council Education Committee—The Director of Education, County Education Offices, Grey Friars, Leicester.

Our Astronomical Column.

NEW COMET.—The first comet of 1928 was discovered photographically by Herr K. Reinmuth, assistant at Königstuhl Observatory, Heidelberg. Herr Reinmuth is well known as a discoverer of minor planets, having found more than a hundred of them, but this is his first comet; as the new comet is near the ecliptic, it was doubtless found in the course of the routine search for minor planets. Its magnitude is 12½. The following positions have been obtained at Königstuhl and circulated by the I.A.U. Bureau, Copenhagen:

	U.T.	R.A. (1928.0).	N. Decl. (1928.0).
Feb. 22.	96160	9h 15m 4s	21° 44' 0"
„ 23.	96368	9 14 54.93	21 52 39
„ 24.	95736	9 14 42.20	22 0 6
„ 25.	93181	9 14 33.93	22 6 57

The motion is getting slower; an estimated prediction for Mar. 4.0 is 9h 15m 36s, N. Decl. 22° 43'; the full moon will, however, prevent observation for a few days. There has not been time as yet to compute an orbit; in any case, the above arc is too short to determine reliable elements. The slow motion probably implies that the object is at a considerable distance.

There is occasionally a double solution to the problem of finding an orbit from three observations; an interesting case of this arose last year in the orbit of Gale's comet; the observations of the first six weeks could be satisfied with periods of either 11 or 13 years, the former being found to be correct when a longer series of observations was available. Prof. T. Banachiewicz discusses this question in *Acta Astronomica* for Feb. 7, and gives the discriminating rules in a simple form; the case to which he applies them (Orkisz's comet) has only a single solution; an example with a double solution would have been more instructive.

A LARGE SUNSPOT.—A large sunspot, nearest the centre of the sun's disc on Feb. 21, was seen in London by many people through the screen of mist

or fog prevailing about that time. A small telescope showed that the group consisted of a principal spot accompanied by an aggregation of irregular spots or penumbral markings to the south. The latter decreased considerably as the group crossed the disc. No unusual disturbance of the earth's magnetic elements has been reported. In *NATURE* of Feb. 11, p. 220, a short account was given of a large prominence which was observed near a spot when at the sun's west limb. The recent group is either a return or a revival in the place of this earlier spot. Other particulars of the later and larger spot are given below, and it may be added that this is the first one this year to be recorded generally as a naked-eye object, although several other large spots are mentioned in *NATURE* of Feb. 11.

No.	Date on Disc.	Central Meridian Passage.	Latitude.	Maximum Area.
1	Feb. 15-28	Feb. 21.6	6° N.	1/700 of hemisphere

THE GREGORIAN CALENDAR IN EGYPT.—The 'Old Style' or Julian Calendar has now become practically obsolete, having taken nearly three and a half centuries to do so. The Orthodox Church in Greece adopted some years ago a modified form of the Gregorian Calendar; instead of the 400-year cycle of the Gregorian calendar, it uses a 900-year one; but as the two calendars are exactly the same for about seven centuries from the present time, the difference is not of immediate importance. The *Times* of Feb. 15 announces that the Synod of the Patriarchate of Alexandria, representing the Orthodox Church in Egypt, has decided to adopt the Gregorian calendar from Oct. 1, 1928 (Sept. 18, Old Style). Presumably it is following the same form of it as the Greek Orthodox Church; the latter body also differs from western usage in the manner of computing Easter, which is made to depend on the actual moon, instead of using the simplified 'ecclesiastical moon.' The day used is that of the meridian of Jerusalem, thus getting rid of difficulties of longitude.