

Joannes de Loureiro made in the eighteenth century the collection (now in the Department of Botany) on which his "Flora Cochinchinensis" (1790) was based.

THE Director of the Meteorological Office is investigating the violent 'whirlwind' which struck the West End of London on Monday evening, Oct. 22, and has asked for the loan of the records of recording barometers or any other recording meteorological instruments from anywhere within a radius of about 20 miles of Charing Cross. Up to Oct. 26, he had received 92 communications, of which 74 were accompanied by barograms, and many contained other valuable information. From the records received it appears that the disturbance moved northwards along a straight track of small width, from near Victoria Station to Euston, passing near Piccadilly Circus and Oxford Circus. It then continued in the same line with diminished intensity. Barograms on the track differ from those off it in showing an additional very sudden fall and recovery of the barometer as the disturbance passed. They tend to confirm that the phenomenon had many of the characteristics of an American tornado. Disturbances of a similar kind occurred in other parts of England on the same occasion, in particular at Bromley, Kent, and near Hythe, Southampton. Records should be addressed to the Director, Meteorological Office (M.O. 12), Air Ministry, Kingsway, W.C.2.

PROF. RAYMOND A. DART, professor of anatomy in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, has been elected a corresponding member of the Italian Institute of Human Palaeontology, Florence, "in recognition of their deep appreciation of the distinction he has achieved in their branch of science." The membership of the Institute is restricted to 50 Italians and 50 corresponding members.

PROF. W. E. DALBY will give an address to the London Local Section of the Institute of Metals, on Nov. 8, at 8 P.M., at the Royal School of Mines, South Kensington, S.W.7, on "The Plastic Contour." Prof. Dalby will deal with his own work on the mechanical properties of materials. The meeting is an open one, for which tickets can be obtained on application to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. W. T. Griffiths, c/o The Mond Nickel Co., Ltd., Victoria Station House, London, S.W.1.

THE reform of the British patent system is the subject of a report which is to be issued by the British Science Guild next week. Eighteen months ago the Guild appointed a committee to study the problems which arise in this connexion, under the chairmanship of Dr. W. H. Eccles. The members of the committee included well-known inventors, research workers, barristers, patent agents, and ex-officers of the Patent Office, and it is understood that they will put forward about fifty proposals of a practical character for the general improvement of the system and the remedy of existing anomalies and hardships. It is now twenty years or more since the last extensive amendment of the patent laws in Great Britain took place, and the time is undoubtedly ripe for a thorough overhauling,

in the light of the experience gained during that period, of this vital factor in industry.

MR. CECIL L. HORTON, of the Department of Lands, Jerusalem, writes to point out that the equation between the month of August and the Moslem month of Muharram in our Calendar of Customs and Festivals (see NATURE, Sept. 1, p. 334) is incorrect. The Moslem year being divided into lunar months, there is no fixed correspondence between the Islamic and Roman calendars. He adds that in the current year the 1st Muharram occurred on June 18, and next year will fall about June 7. Mr. C. A. Silberrad, of Forest Side, Epping, also writes to point out that in our note on his correction in reference to the Moslem year (see NATURE, Sept. 29, p. 489) it should have been made clear that the maximum variation of twenty-two days was in respect of the Hindu solar-lunar year only, whereas the Moslem calendar works back eleven days in each Christian year, and a whole year in thirty-three Christian years. In the course of this cycle of thirty-three years any Moslem festival occurs approximately thrice in every month of the Christian year.

MESSRS. Bernard Quaritch, Ltd., 11 Grafton Street, W.1, have just published Catalogue No. 420 of second-hand books on botany, agriculture, early medicine and surgery, forestry, fruit-culture, gardens and gardening, herbals, modern medicine, and tobacco. Of the 1800 works listed, many are exceedingly rare. The catalogue should be of great interest and value to librarians and others.

APPLICATIONS are invited for the following appointments, on or before the dates mentioned:—A research assistant and demonstrator in geology in the University of Leeds—The Registrar, The University, Leeds (Nov. 5). A graduate assistant to teach physics and electro-technology at the Junior Technical School and the Technical College, Barrow-in-Furness—The Director of Education, Town Hall, Barrow-in-Furness (Nov. 7). A professor of economics in the University of Adelaide—The Agent-General for South Australia, Australia House, Strand, W.C.2 (Nov. 20). A professor of mathematics in the University of Western Australia—The Agent-General for Western Australia, 115 Strand, W.C.2 (Dec. 18). A lecturer in economics and public administration in the Department of Adult Education of University College, Nottingham—The Registrar, University College, Nottingham. A Drapers' Company research scholar in dyeing at the Huddersfield Technical College—The Principal, Technical College, Huddersfield. A junior assistant under the Directorate of Explosives Research of the Research Department, Woolwich—The Chief Superintendent, Research Department, Woolwich, S.E.18.

ERRATUM.—The first sentence in the third paragraph of the letter by Messrs. Aborn and Davidson, entitled "X-Ray Studies of the Structure of Salts Adsorbed on Cellulose," in NATURE of Sept. 22 (p. 440), should read: "Investigations were made both with starch and with cellulose in the form of filter paper."