remark " it may be " ; the current rating of the small portable set mentioned is 10 milliamperes, not 10 microamperes.

THE leading article in last week's NATURE referred to a suggestion by Mr. J. B. S. Haldane that the Cabinet might contain at least one member with scientific knowledge. Mr. W. P. Dreaper reminds us that fifteen years ago, starting from the other end, he suggested that there should be a Science Committee in the House of Commons. As at present constituted, it would perhaps be difficult to form such a committee in the House, but as it has been stated that the time lag of all such changes is nineteen years, Mr. Dreaper hopes that his suggestion may come into effect in the next Parliament.

APPLICATIONS are invited for the following appointments, on or before the dates mentioned :—An assistant master to teach mathematics in the Smethwick Junior Technical School—The Director of Education, 215 High Street, Smethwick (Dec. 10). A junior assistant under the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, for work on plasters and other materials used for impressions and models in dentistry—The Secretary, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, 16 Old Queen Street, S.W.1 (Dec. 13). A laboratory assistant in the biology department of King's College of Household and Social Science —The Secretary, King's College of Household and Social Science, 61 Campden Hill Road, W.8 (Dec. 15). A physicist under the Australian Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, to take charge of seismic investigations in connexion with the Imperial Geophysical Experimental Survey—Mr. F. L. McDougall, Australia House, Strand, W.C.2 (Dec. 19). A temporary junior chemist at an Admiralty Inspection Establishment — The Secretary of the Admiralty (C.E. Branch), Whitehall, S.W.1 (Dec. 22). Junior assistants at the National Physical Laboratory, with qualifications in physics, electrical engineering or mechanical engineering — The Director, National Physical Laboratory, Teddington (Dec. 22). An expert in cattle breeding under the Egyptian Government, Ministry of Agriculture—The Royal Egyptian Legation, 75 South Audley Street, W.1 (Jan. 1). A professor of medicine in the University of Hong Kong—The Chief Medical Officer, Ministry of Health, Whitehall, S.W.1 (Jan. 7). Research workers at the Rowett Research Institute on, respectively, the nutrition of poultry and the nutrition of sheep—The Secretary, The Rowett Research Institute, Bucksburn, Aberdeen. A male technical assistant with honours in chemistry or physics, under the Chemical Warfare Research Department—The Chief Superintendent, Chemical Warfare Research Department, 14 Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.1.

Our Astronomical Column.

PUBLICATIONS OF BERGEDORF OBSERVATORY.—Bergedorf Observatory deserves the thanks of astronomers for the useful series of reference volumes that it is publishing. The G.F.H. or history of the fixed stars has been proceeding in instalments for several years. But that work does not contain observations made later than 1900 ; as large numbers of more recent catalogues have now accumulated, two volumes containing references to meridian observations made in the present century have just been published, dealing respectively with north and south declinations. Each volume has about 300 pages. The arrangement of the Durchmusterung is followed. The stars are grouped in degree of declination, the reference number of each star according to the Bonn or Cordoba D.M. ; then follow a pair of numbers ; the first number is the index denoting a catalogue ; 401 catalogues are listed at the end of each volume ; the second number is that borne by the star in the catalogue referred to. There are a considerable number of stars not contained in the D.M. ; these are given in separate lists, at the end of each degree of declination. Thus the material available for each star is shown at a glance.

Bergedorf has also produced a catalogue of its own, containing 4983 stars observed with the Repsold meridian-circle between the years 1913 and 1926. The classes of stars observed are those in Rumker's Hamburg catalogue that needed re-observation, stars with large proper motion, variable stars, comparison stars for planets or comets, etc. ; for example, Barnard's proper-motion star and some of its neighbours were observed in 1919. The catalogue bears the name of Dr. F. Dolberg, who did the whole of the observation at the telescope and a large part of the reductions.

THE TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE OF OCT. 22, 1930.—This eclipse has a track across the Pacific Ocean, but there are two islands within the belt of totality : Nurakita in the Ellice group, and Niuafou, some 280 miles south of Samoa. *Popular Astronomy* for October contains an article on Niuafou by Mr. Andrew Thomson, Director of the Apia Observatory. He was one of the observers from the United States of the eclipse of 1919 at Sobral, Brazil. Niuafou is a volcanic island about 3 miles in diameter. Mr. Ramsey, a trader on the island, is quoted as saying that landing would generally be practicable for packing cases of moderate size. There are 1100 inhabitants, and a Catholic mission has been there for many years. It is 8 miles from the central line, and totality will last 83 seconds, the sun's altitude being 52°. The weather statistics for Apia indicate the cloud ratio at 9 A.M. in October as 4·8, this being the same as the average for the whole year. 10 A.M. is about the clearest time of the day at Apia ; the local time of mid-eclipse is 9.9 A.M. Some expeditions to Niuafou have already been vaguely planned, but no definite arrangements have yet been made.

Predecessors of this eclipse in the Saros cycle occurred in 1858 and 1912, both being total in Brazil. The first was observed by Liais ; a Greenwich expedition went to the second but experienced cloudy weather.

NOVA IN MESSIER 33.—*I. A. U. Circular*, No. 211, announces the detection of a nova in this nebula by Dr. Baade at Bergedorf Observatory. It is 2′ preceding and 8′ south of the nucleus ; it is thus comparatively near the centre of the nebula, the diameter of which is about 1°. The magnitude of the nova is 16·0, which on Hubble's value for the distance of the nebula (870,000 light years), gives an absolute magnitude of − 6. Novæ in the spirals have been discovered in considerable numbers, there being 67 in the Andromeda nebula between 1909 and 1926. The discovery of the present nova was presumably effected with the large reflector at Bergedorf, which has proved so efficient in the detection of very faint comets.