ciety, for 1886, has been awarded to Messrs. Capello and Ivens, for their African journeys. A smaller gold medal has been given to the 'Pundit A. K.,' one of the anonymous explorers for England of upper Tibet; and medals of silver and bronze to Messrs. Bloyet and H. Mager, for African topography and the 'Colonial atlas.' The *prix Logerot* is received by M. Marche, for his explorations of the Philippines.

A new oil. — The oil of a species of bamboo of African origin is reported by the Catholic missionaries of Alima in Africa to be an excellent lubricator, and, when refined, to form a fair substitute for olive-oil in the cuisine. The new industry thus created is actually in process of development in the French Kongo region.

Ethnographic map of Asia. —Von Haardt of Vienna has sent out a prospectus of a new ethnographic map of Asia, in six sheets, scale 1: 8,000,000, total size 175 x 140 cm. The scheme includes one hundred and thirty-six ethnic divisions, to be indicated by appropriate tints and hachuring. The subscription price is placed at thirty francs. The classification adopted has its defects; but the map, which will be accompanied by a small explanatory pamphlet, to all interested in the distribution of mankind, will have great value. If successful, it will be followed by maps of other continents, on the same plan. Subscriptions are to be sent to Eduard Hölzel, Vienna, Weyringergasse 19.

ASTRONOMICAL NOTES.

The two comets. — Fabry's comet continues to increase in brightness, and on a clear morning is bright enough to be made out with the naked eye, though it does not reach a sufficient altitude before sunrise to be very conspicuous in the presence of bright moonlight. Barnard described it on the 8th inst. as a hazy object with a faint tail, which, in the telescope, could be traced for five or six degrees. On April 24 the comet will be in the constellation Triangulum, in right ascension $1^h\ 32^m$, north declination 30° 3′, and will appear above the horizon about half-past three in the morning. Its brightness is then 297 times as great as at the time of discovery. The comet is increasing its right ascension, and is moving rapidly south: at the end of April, according to Dr. Oppenheim's ephemeris, it will approach us within a fifth part of the distance of the sun, and its theoretical brightness will be nearly 500 times that at discovery. Barnard's comet is also increasing in brightness, but somewhat more slowly than Fabry's. It makes its nearest approach to the sun in the first week of May, and its nearest to the earth in the latter part of that month. The position for the last of this week (April 24) is: right ascension, $1^h\ 40^m$; north declination, 39° 39′, with a calculated brightness of 62: it is nearly midway between the second magnitude stars β and γ Andromedae, and sets a little after eight o'clock. The astronomical positions we have given can readily be found upon the star-maps (map I.) given in the *Science* Almanac for last year (vol. iv. No. 99) or upon any celestial atlas.

The new nebula in the Pleiades. — The nebula discovered by the Henry brothers of the Paris observatory, upon their photographic negative of the Pleiades taken Nov. 16, 1885, has been seen — now that its existence is known — without great difficulty, by Perrotin and his assistants at Nice, and by Struve with his new 30-inch Clark objective, and also with the 15-inch at Pulkowa. Struve gives a careful description of the nebula, accompanied by a sketch, in the *Astronomische nachrichten* (No. 2,719), and from his observations it seems probable that some of the small stars in the immediate neighborhood may prove to be interesting variables. The nebula is of a characteristic spiral form, and seems to 'escape' from the star Maia. Professor Pickering, upon the announcement of the discovery, recalled the circumstance that certain irregularities had been noticed in a photograph of the Pleiades taken on Nov. 3, 1885, at Harvard college observatory. These irregularities, which had been referred to defects in the photographic process, correspond closely with the descriptions of the nebula, and no doubt represent light photographically visible near Maia. "The explanation thus afforded, of one of the markings on the Cambridge photograph, makes the others of more interest than seemed at first to belong to them. There are indications of nebulous light about Merope; four short parallel streaks directed to the south following side are particularly noticeable, and a faint prolongation of diffuse light may be suspected towards the south, in agreement with the descriptions usually given of the visible nebula in that region. There is also a faint streak of light projecting from Electra on the following side. . . . No nebulous light is noticeable about Alcyone, Atlas, Pleione, or Taygeta."

NOTES AND NEWS.

As stated in our 'Boston letter' of March 12, the liberality and co-operation of the Woman's education association enable the Boston society of natural history to announce that the Seaside laboratory at Annisquam, Mass., will be open to students during the coming summer from June 15 to Aug. 15, 1886. Annisquam is situated on an inlet of Ipswich Bay, on the north side of Cape Ann,