

lands), and three issues have now appeared. This bibliographical work is to appear three times a year and each issue will contain about a hundred abstracts of papers on the application of statistical methods in industry and technology published in all parts of the world. It is the intention of the editors to prepare the abstracts in such a manner that the reader will be able to judge whether or not the original article would be of interest to him. 'Industry' will be interpreted broadly to include transport, mining, generation of electric power and management problems in agriculture (but not agronomy). Theoretical papers that have direct industrial and engineering applications will be included. The abstracts will be in English or in French, and printed on one side only of thin cardboard, so that they can be cut out and filed as 3 in. × 5 in. cards. Industrial statisticians who are willing to co-operate in the preparation of abstracts are invited to communicate with the appropriate regional editor; for the United Kingdom, he is Dr. E. H. Lloyd, Department of Mathematics, Imperial College of Science and Technology, London, S.W.7.

Decay of Wood in Boats

BULLETIN No. 21 of Forest Products Research, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1954), deals with "Prevention of Decay of Wood in Boats". In the days when all ships and boats were built of wood, the problem was a serious one because the nature of the decay was not understood and so no prevention or cure could be applied. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries naval authorities were seriously alarmed at the rapidity with which timbers in wooden battleships deteriorated and many remedies were tried without success. During and since the Second World War the problem has again become prominent owing to the increasing number of less-durable timbers in use. This bulletin is the result of a discussion between naval architects, representatives of boat-building firms and officers of the Forest Products Research Laboratory. As would be expected, the decay is found to be most serious in vessels which are laid up for parts of the year or are held in reserve. The bulletin describes with diagrams the fungi responsible for this decay and the conditions under which they develop. The decay is frequently alluded to by the term 'dry rot', which is caused by the fungus *Merulius lacrymans*. The name should be avoided, as this fungus is seldom found on a boat. The commonest wood-destroying fungi known to occur in boats are *Coniophora cerebella* (the cellar fungus) and species of the genus *Poria*. Methods for eradicating decay and preventing its development in new craft by the use of naturally durable timbers and modern wood preservatives are outlined.

Oil Palm Research

WITH the appearance of the second number of the *Journal of the West African Institute for Oil Palm Research* (September 1954), this new publication may be said to have got fairly into its stride. It promises to be of great value to all who are concerned with this important tropical crop. It combines in a useful way up-to-date investigations both of an applied and of a more fundamental character, while the critical reviews of other publications relating to oil palm matters seem likely to confer on the journal a centralizing and integrating function. The present number includes articles on the improvement of natural palm groves—an important domestic con-

sideration in Nigeria, where most of the palm oil comes from this source—and the effect of cultural treatments on losses in the nursery. A sound foundation for future work on the diseases of the oil palm is provided by a preliminary account, with descriptions, illustrations and diagnostic key, of all the diseases thus far encountered in Nigerian territory. As the oil palm is often grown on somewhat, or even highly, impoverished soils, deficiency diseases assume a considerable magnitude from the point of view of both production and research. One of these diseases, described as orange frond, has now been shown to be due to magnesium deficiency and can be remedied by appropriate treatment. A further article relates to two new caterpillar diseases which may cause considerable destruction of palms.

Zoological Nomenclature

As from July 31, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature will start to vote on the following cases involving the possible use of the plenary powers for the purpose specified against each entry. Full particulars of these cases have been published on January 31, 1955, in Parts 1 and 2 of vol. 11 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*. (1) *Pleurotomaria* Sowerby (J.), 1821, validation of (if judged to be invalid); *anglicus* Sowerby (J.), 1818 (*Trochus*), validation of, and designation of, as type species of *Pleurotomaria* (Cl. Gastropoda); (2) *Pachyceras* Bayle, 1878 (Cl. Cephalopoda, Order Ammonoidea), validation of; (3) *Neanura* McGillivray, 1893, and *Hypogastrura* Bourlet, 1839, designation of type species for; *Achorutes* Templeton, 1835, suppression of (Cl. Insecta, Order Collembola); (4) *Crenophilus*, validation of, as from d'Orchymont, 1942; *aeneus* Germar, 1824 (*Hydrophilus*), validation of (Cl. Insecta, Order Coleoptera); (5) *Rhinopteraspis* Jaekel, 1919, validation of (Cl. Ostracodermi); (6) *Anurophorus* Nicolet [1842], designation of type species for (Cl. Insecta, Order Collembola). Attention is directed also to the proposed suppression of the generic name *Jumala* Friele, 1882, as a name calculated to give offence on religious grounds. The above Parts also contain proposals for the adoption of three 'Declarations': (a) relating to transliteration of words normally written in Cyrillic characters (preliminary to insertion in the Code as a schedule (Copenhagen decision)); (b) defining the status of a generic name published conditionally; (c) clarifying Rule (f) in Article 30 (type species of a nominal genus established as a substitute for a previously established such genus but with a different type species). Comments on the above cases should be sent as soon as possible to Mr. Francis Hemming, Secretary to the Commission, 28 Park Village East, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1.

The National Science Foundation, Washington

THE National Science Foundation, Washington, has announced 216 grants totalling about 2,650,000 dollars for the support of basic research in the natural sciences, for conferences and studies on science, scientific information exchange, for scientific manpower, and for travel of American scientists to international scientific meetings. This is the first group of awards to be made during the fiscal year 1955 by the Foundation for the support of basic research and related matters. Since the beginning of the programme in 1951, more than 1,100 such awards have been made, totalling about 11,141,000 dollars. In addition, the first grant, totalling 100,000 dollars,