

stability of leather, and for a reassessment of present-day industrial practice.

### Soils of North Borneo

*Colonial Research Studies* No. 36 presents the results of a survey, financed from Colonial and Development Welfare funds, designed to assess the agricultural potential of an area of a million acres of high jungle in the south-east of North Borneo (*A Reconnaissance Soil Survey of the Semporna Peninsula, North Borneo*. By T. R. Paton. Pp. v+111+19 plates+8 maps. London: H.M.S.O., 1963. 28s.). The Semporna Peninsula is mountainous and hilly, a site of extinct volcanoes, the maximum elevation being 4,200 ft.; but there are also large flat areas of alluvium laid down through obstruction of rivers by basalt flows in Quaternary times. There is also a coastal level platform at 50–100 ft. above sea-level—possibly the result of a recent uplift—and a raised coral platform at 8–10 ft. above sea-level. The limited meteorological data show that rainfall is variable, mostly as intense downpours, and averages about 80 in. per annum, and that the temperature fluctuates between 70° and 90° F. The geology is characterized by several volcanic periods, from early Miocene to recent times, responsible for adjustments in drainage systems and unusual soil distributions. The vegetation includes mangrove swamp, “coastal padang” (canopy 60 ft.), and “mossy forest” on the poor soils at altitudes over 2,000 ft. A large variety of tropical crops is grown, particularly rubber, Manila hemp and coconut, while oil palm and cocoa are promising. The fishing communities also grow some maize on the coral platform and cassava on the hillsides. The greatest development is in mechanized logging which may accelerate erosion. In general, the soil groups are confined to certain parent materials, the age of which is related to the topography, and could be characterized by chemical analysis. They are compared with the soils of other tropical areas and are discussed with relation to susceptibility to erosion and possible future land use. There are 19 plates illustrating the terrain, parent materials, soil profiles and vegetation, tables of analytical data for 38 profiles and 8 soil maps 1: 50,000.

### Air Pollution and Pharmaceutical Reagents

THE World Health Organization has published a survey of existing legislation relating to *Air Pollution*, the importance of which in our modern civilization needs no emphasis (Pp. 45. Geneva: World Health Organization; London: H.M.S.O., 1963. 2 Sw. francs; 3s. 6d.; 60 cents). Equally important, or perhaps more so, is the need to subject all drugs to rigorous clinical and pharmacological tests before they are marketed, and this can scarcely be done unless the reagents used for these tests are themselves standardized and unified. As a step towards the achievement of this standardization, the World Health Organization has published a useful volume entitled *Specification for Reagents Mentioned in the International Pharmacopoeia*, which proposes specifications for the reagents required for tests and assays applied to the preparations described in the *International Pharmacopoeia* (Pp. 267. Geneva: World Health Organization; London: H.M.S.O., 1963. 18 Sw. francs; 30s.; 6 dollars).

### Friction and Transfer of Polytetrafluoroethylene

In the article “Friction and Transfer of Polytetrafluoroethylene”, by Mrs. K. R. Makinson and Dr. D. Tabor (*Nature*, 201, 464; 1964), Fig. 2b should have been mounted at right angles to the direction shown. The PTFE chains are, in fact, oriented parallel to the direction of sliding and not normal to the direction of sliding as stated in the article. The error is due to a mistaken calibration of the rotation of the electron diffraction pattern relative to the electron micrograph. The authors have written to the Editor pointing out this error and

thank Mr. N. K. J. Symons for bringing this to their attention. These corrected results are consistent with the earlier observation of Tabor and Wynne-Williams (*Wear*, 4, 391; 1961) that friction on oriented PTFE is lower along the direction of the polymer chains than across them.

### The Society for Developmental Biology

THE Society for Developmental Biology has been founded in order to bring together scientists from as many fields as possible who may be interested in problems connected with the development of organisms. It is hoped to hold three scientific meetings per annum, at a variety of centres in Britain and also to sponsor such other activities as may serve the interests of developmental biology in Britain. The Society's inaugural meeting will be held in Oxford on June 20. Further information can be obtained from the acting secretary, Dr. E. M. Deuchar, Department of Anatomy and Embryology, University College, London, W.C.1.

### The National Institute for Research in Nuclear Science

THE Electron Laboratory of the National Institute for Research in Nuclear Science has now moved to its permanent site at Daresbury in Cheshire, and will in future be known as the Daresbury Nuclear Physics Laboratory. The construction of the Daresbury Laboratory, which will house a 4-GeV electron synchrotron, is proceeding rapidly and it is expected that the first permanent buildings will be ready for occupation in the autumn.

### Announcements

DR. J. BRONOWSKI, formerly director-general of the Process Development Department of the National Coal Board, has been appointed deputy director of the Salk Institute for Biological Studies, San Diego, California.

THE first open days of the Laboratory of the Government Chemist will be held during April 22–23. Further information can be obtained from the Government Chemist, Cornwall House, Stamford Street, London, S.E.1.

THE International Starch Conference, arranged by the Cereal Research Association, will be held in Detmold during April 22–24. Further information can be obtained from Mr. G. Tegge, Arbeitsgemeinschaft Getreideforschung E.V., Detmold.

A SYMPOSIUM on “The Structure and Function of Lipid-containing Systems”, organized by the British Biophysical Society in association with the Biochemical Society, will be held in the University of Birmingham during April 20–21. Further information can be obtained from Dr. T. Galliard, Department of Biochemistry and Pharmacology, New Biology Block, Birmingham 15.

THE forty-fifth annual meeting of the American Geophysical Union will be held in Washington during April 21–24. The programme will include sessions on: geodesy; seismology; meteorology; geomagnetism and aeronomy; oceanography; volcanology; geochemistry and petrology; hydrology; tectonophysics; planetary sciences. Further information can be obtained from the executive secretary of the American Geophysical Union, Waldo E. Smith, 1515 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.

ERRATUM. In the communication entitled “Phantasies on a Natural Unity of Mass”, by Prof. C. Egidio, which appeared on p. 61 of the October 5, 1963, issue of *Nature*, the fifth line of the seventh paragraph should read “. . . three times the cubic root ( $= 3\sqrt[3]{K}$ )”. The ninth line of the ninth paragraph should read “instead of ‘kg’ by Prof. Polvani, now president of the . . .”. In the last line of the final paragraph “ $\mathcal{M}$ ” should be substituted for “ $m$ ”.