

about these things is saddening. It betrays a pathetic lack of scientific faith<sup>1</sup>.

Yours faithfully,

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<sup>1</sup> Wigglesworth, V. B., *Ann. Appl. Biol.*, **60**, 1 (1967).

## Noah's Haemoglobin

SIR.—In the ecumenical interest (*Nature*, **239**, 420; 1972), we wish to point out that the latter portion of Genesis is consistent with current theory of molecular evolution.

Kimura (*Nature*, **217**, 624; 1968) and King and Jukes (*Science*, **164**, 788; 1969) propose that protein evolution has occurred mainly through neutral mutations which have no effect on molecular function and no selective advantage. Haigh and Maynard Smith (*Genet. Res.*, **19**, 73; 1972) have examined this theory with respect to the published data on human haemoglobin variation. They conclude that if the theory is correct the human population must have passed through a period of drastically reduced size prior to the more recent rapid population increase. The

population bottleneck is necessary to give initial genetic homogeneity, a requirement for agreement of theory and observation.

Genesis, chapter 6, contains a full description of events causing a reduction in the human population to eight individuals; Noah, his wife, their three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, and the sons' wives. It seems entirely plausible that this small population could be homogeneous for haemoglobin genes. Thus the book of Genesis documents a series of human population changes which are consistent with changes required from consideration of amino-acid sequences alone.

Yours faithfully,

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## Titles and Reprints

SIR.—As a librarian, I can easily answer the puzzle postulated by Briggs and Briggs<sup>1</sup> as to why more requests were received for a paper published in *Contraception*<sup>2</sup> than for the one in

*Nature*<sup>3</sup>. *Nature* is more readily available. Virtually all scientific libraries have at least one subscription to *Nature*; whereas relatively few subscribe to the highly specialized *Contraception*.

Even though photocopying is cheaper than mailing a request, without the journal at hand a reprint is necessary.

Also as a librarian, I want to admonish the editor of *Nature* for publishing a paper with a deliberately misleading title. This paper will turn up as a false drop for years to come. The use of titles has become a powerful literature searching technique<sup>4</sup>. It is bad enough that uninformative titles are still being written through ignorance, but to write phoney titles intentionally is just outright perverse.

Yours faithfully,

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- 1 Briggs, M. H., and Briggs, M., *Nature*, **240**, 490 (1972).
- 2 Briggs, M. H., Briggs, M., and Austin, J., *Nature*, **232**, 480 (1971).
- 3 Briggs, M. H., and Briggs, M., *Contraception*, **3**, 381 (1971).
- 4 Windsor, D. A., *J. Chem. Document.*, **11**, 227 (1971).

# Announcements

## University News

**Dr William Robert Dearman**, Newcastle upon Tyne, has been appointed to a professorship in engineering geology from August 1, 1972.

**Dr Alan Williams**, Leeds University, has been appointed Livesey professor and head of the Department of Fuel and Combustion Science from January 1, 1973.

**Dr G. C. Morrison**, Illinois, USA, has been appointed to the Chair of Nuclear Structure at the University of Birmingham.

**Professor Roger Penrose**, Birkbeck College, London, has been appointed to the Rouse Ball Professorship of Mathematics, at the University of Oxford, in succession to Professor C. A. Coulson, Oxford.

## Appointments

**Dr Edwin Clarke**, MD, FRCP, has been appointed Director of the Wellcome Institute of the History of Medicine as from October 1, 1973.

## Miscellaneous

The **Lomonsov Gold Medals for 1972**—the highest award of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, awarded annually for out-

standing achievements in the natural sciences to one Soviet and one foreign scientist—have been awarded to **Academician Nikolsi Ivanovich Muskhelishvili** for his work in mathematics and mechanics, and to **Professor Max Steenbeck** (German Democratic Republic) for his research on plasma physics.

**Professor Arpad I. Csapo**, Washington University, has been awarded the 1972 award of the **International Health Foundation** on "Prospects for Practical Application of Prostaglandins".

## International Meetings

The University of Texas Health Science Center, Houston, announces the Tenth Symposium on Biomathematics and Computer Science in the Life Sciences to be presented at Houston, Texas, March 1973. (Dr Stuart Zimmerman, University of Texas.)

## Reports and Publications

not included in the Monthly Books Supplement

### Great Britain and Ireland

Agricultural Research Institute of Northern Ireland. Forty-fifth Annual Report, 1971/1972. Pp. 43. (Hillsborough, Co. Down: Agricultural Research Institute of Northern Ireland, 1972.) [2910]  
Towards a Future for Inland Shipping. (Comments by the Inland Waterways Association on the Future of Inland Waterways Transport in the Light of the Proposed Regional Water Authorities.) Pp. 12. (London: The Inland Waterways Association, 1972.) 20p. [2910]  
Bulletin of the British Museum (Natural History), Entomology. Vol. 27, No. 5: On European Pteromalidae (Hymenoptera): a Revision of *Cleonymus*,

*Eunotus* and *Spaniopus*, with Descriptions of New Genera and Species. By Z. Bouček. Pp. 265-315. £1.85. Historical Series. Vol. 4, No. 3: Charles Darwin's *Queries About Expression*. By Richard Broke Freeman and Peter Jack Gautrey. Pp. 205-219+1 plate. 65p. Zoology. Vol. 23, No. 1: The Gunong Benom Expedition 1967. 1: Introduction. By Lord Medway. Pp. 1-7+4 plates. 75p. Vol. 23, No. 2: The Gunong Benom Expedition 1967. 2: An Outline Description of the Forest Zones on North-East Gunong Benom. By T. C. Whitmore. 3: Bryophytes and Filmy Ferns from Gunong Benom. By Anne Johnson. Pp. 9-20+8 plates. £1.15. Vol. 23, No. 4: The Gunong Benom Expedition 1967. 5: Reptiles and Amphibians of Gunong Benom with a Description of a New Species of *Macrocalamus*. By A. G. C. Grandison. Pp. 43-101. £2.55. Vol. 23, No. 7: The Gunong Benom Expedition 1967. 8: Ticks (Ixodidae) of Gunong Benom and Their Antitropical Distribution, Hosts and Medical Relationships. By H. Hoogstraal, B. L. Lim, M. Natchatram and G. Anastos. Pp. 165-186. 75p. Vol. 23, No. 8: The Gunong Benom Expedition 1967. 9: A Collection of Chiggers from Gunong Benom (Prostigmata: Trombiculidae). By M. Natchatram. 10: Pthiraptera (Insecta) Chewing and Sucking Lice. By Theresa Claxey. Pp. 187-200. 65p. (London: British Museum (Natural History), 1972.) [2910]  
Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London. A: Mathematical and Physical Sciences. Vol. 273, No. 1233: Dynamics of the Liquid Core of the Earth. By C. L. Pekeris and Y. Accad. Pp. 237-260. (London: The Royal Society, 1972.) 65p; \$1.80. [3110]  
BBC Handbook 1973. Pp. 294+75 photographs. (London: BBC, 1972.) 75p. [3110]  
Imperial College. Royal School of Mines Research Report 1969-72. (Geology, Mining and Mineral Technology, Metallurgy.) Pp. 64. (London: Imperial College of Science and Technology, 1972.) [3110]  
Procter and Gamble Limited. Annual Report for the year ended 30th June, 1972. Pp. 12. (Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne: Procter and Gamble, Ltd., 1972.) [3110]  
Post Office Investment for the Future. Pp. 24. (London: Post Office, 1972.) [3110]  
Geological Society of London. Special Report No. 2: A Correlation of Cambrian Rocks in the British Isles. By John Watson Cowie, Adrian Williams, Amsler Rushton and Cyril James Stubbsfield. Pp. 42. £1.20; \$3. Special Report No. 3: A Correlation of Ordovician Rocks in the British Isles. By A. Williams, I. Strachan, D. A. Bassett, W. T. Dean, J. K. Ingham, A. D. Wright and H. B. Whittington. Pp. 74. £1.20; \$3. (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, Ltd., 1972.) [3110]  
Forestry Commission. Research and Development Papers. No. 87: Production and Use of Ball-rooted Planting Stock in Sweden and Finland. By A. J. Low and R. M. Brown. Pp. 25. No. 88: Dissemination and Application of Research Information in the Field. By O. N. Blatchford. Pp. 4. No. 89: Formulation and Implementation of Forest