

motion of improved practices in the heavily grazed grasslands has been a major concern of the Food and Agriculture Organization in cooperation with the member countries through special working parties on pasture and fodder developments. FAO also has sought to direct constructive attention to the problems of drainage and salt accumulation in irrigated areas throughout the Middle East, problems that threaten the future stability of agriculture in large areas [FAO, *Report on Near East Regional Meeting on Irrigation and Drainage Practices* (1954)]. Success along these lines will require patient and knowing education aimed at applying present scientific knowledge of grazing and irrigated lands to local situations. Drastic readjustments in land use, land tenure, and community organization will be necessary in many instances. However, even with the most sensitive and effective educational work, there will remain major questions that will be solved only as a result of new research in the field. Thus, the UNESCO encouragement of basic investigations by well-trained staffs should lay the groundwork for extension and development activities a decade later.

In harmony with this effort to encourage some consistent government attention to basic research on problems of aridity in the zone between Cairo and New Delhi, the advisory committee has recommended early publication on an appropriately large scale of maps showing the water budget. Investigators of all aspects of arid lands have recognized the need for understanding water surplus or water deficit. These are covered in a project recently completed by Carter at the Laboratory of Climatology [D. B. Carter, "Climates of Africa and India according to Thornthwaite's 1948 classification," *Lab. Climatol. Publs.* 7, 4 (1954)].

Financing of this UNESCO program beyond 1956 will depend on authorization from the general conference to be held next November. The arid zone work is listed as one of two "major projects" to be reviewed in the budget at that time. The tentative budget was examined by the executive board last November and now is before the member governments for consideration. At the meeting of the United States National Commission for UNESCO last autumn, there was extensive discussion of the arid zone activities, and there was some talk of organizing a national group or committee to deal with these activities. In a few countries, such as Mexico, this already has been done.

Any effort at international cooperation in encouraging research runs the risk of setting up top-heavy organization. There also is risk of loading the program so fully upon government agencies and, therefore, intergovernmental agreements

that the easy, free movement of thought between individual scientific workers or scientific societies is impeded. So far UNESCO seems to have avoided these hazards, just as it has avoided becoming an operating agency on arid zone research. New ideas, fresh illumination, perfected techniques come from men working alone or in small groups. At best, an international organization can make it easier for them to communicate, a good deal easier to find official recognition and support, and much easier to move their findings into the arena of action.

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New Marine Biological Laboratory in Brazil

A new marine biological laboratory, the Laboratório de Biologia Marinha de São Sebastião, was inaugurated last September at the beach of Segredo, 6 kilometers south of São Sebastião, State of São Paulo, Brazil. The laboratory faces the channel between the continent and the mountainous island of São Sebastião. The first main building is equipped with electricity, gas, and tapwater, despite the fact that the whole laboratory is in close proximity to an almost untouched tropical forest on a small hill nearby. Another building was built as living quarters and mess hall for guest investigators and their families.

Segredo Beach borders a small bay limited at both ends by small rocky hills; the beach itself is covered with fine white sand. Being an almost untouched place, it still exhibits the tropical fauna and flora, marine as well as terrestrial, at their best. Its position is not far from the point where the island of São Sebastião southwards comes to an end; this makes available for the laboratory a great variety of biotopes: the channel, the open sea, and rocky and sandy beaches washed by calm as well as rough seas. The main building has a short access to the sea and was built approximately 4 meters from the maximum high tide.

The Laboratório de Biologia Marinha de São Sebastião can be reached easily by ship (two weekly trips from Santos) or by car or bus (two daily trips, 6 hours from São Paulo). It is operated by a foundation (Fundação de Biologia Marinha), of which the University of São Paulo and its Departamento de Fisiologia Geral e Animal are founding members. It was built partially from grants made available by the University of São Paulo, the National Research Council of Brazil, and the Rockefeller Foundation. It is intended to be a place where Brazilians and foreigners who are interested in

marine biology can find adequate means of research. Training courses for graduate students in biological sciences will be part of future laboratory activities. For more information write Prof. Paulo Sawaya, Caixa Postal 2926, São Paulo, Brazil.

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AAAS Socio-Psychological Prize

Through the generosity of an anonymous donor, the AAAS offers an annual prize of \$1000 for a meritorious essay in socio-psychological inquiry. The conditions of competition for the prize to be awarded at the 1956 annual meeting, New York, 26-31 Dec., are as follows.

1) The contribution should further the comprehension of the psychological-social-cultural behavior of human beings—the relationships of these hyphenated words being an essential part of the inquiry. Whether the contributor considers himself to be an anthropologist, a psychologist, a sociologist, or a member of some other group is unimportant as long as his essay deals with basic observation and construction in the area variously known as social process, group behavior, or interpersonal behavior. For ease of reference in the rest of this statement, this general area will be called "social behavior."

2) The prize is offered to encourage studies and analyses of social behavior based on explicitly stated assumptions or postulates, which lead to testable conclusions or deductions. In other words, it is a prize intended to encourage in social inquiry the development and application of dependable methodology analogous to the methods that have proved so fruitful in the natural sciences. This is not to state that the methods of any of the natural sciences are to be transferred without change to the study of social behavior, but rather that the development of a science of social behavior is fostered through observation guided by explicit postulates, which in turn are firmly grounded on prior observations. It may be taken for granted that such postulates will include a spatial-temporal framework for the inquiry. It may properly be added that the essay should foster liberation from philosophic-academic conventions and from dogmatic boundaries between different disciplines.

3) Hitherto unpublished manuscripts are eligible, as are manuscripts that have been published since 1 Jan. 1955. Entries may be of any length, but each should present a completed analysis of a problem, the relevant data, and an interpretation of the data in terms of the postulates with which the study began.