METEOROLOGY

Strange Pebble Ripples Formed at South Pole

➤ STRANGE WAVES of pebbles, one foot high and about five feet between crests, have been discovered on ice-free land of Antarctica, Dr. H. T. U. Smith of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, told the 78th annual meeting of the Geological Society of America in Kansas City, Mo.

The atmosphere of that cold barren continent is heavier and denser than air in temperate climates, so winds are able to blow pebbles into these strange formations, said Dr. Smith.

Many pebbles are one-half inch long, and some are more than one inch in length. The waves of pebbles were found within a radius of 125 miles of the U.S. research station at McMurdo Sound on Victoria Land.

Participants at the meeting included about 3,000 geologists, mineralogists, hydrologists and other scientists.

• Science News Letter, 88:324 November 20, 1965

METEOROLOGY

Winds Dim Earthquake Noise Ears Cannot Hear

➤ NOISY WINDS are interfering with the low frequency sounds of volcanoes and earthquakes that can be detected by sensitive instruments, Howard S. Bowman of the National Bureau of Standards, Washington, D. C., told the Acoustical Society of America in St. Louis, Mo. These sounds are below the audible range.

By comparing local wind velocities with infrasonic noise levels in the atmosphere, he found that whenever peak wind gusts were recorded there was a corresponding rise in wind noise. As a result, Mr. Bowman said, future recording stations of the low frequency sounds will need to be installed in places where there is little likelihood of high winds. Plans are also underway to improve wind filters to eliminate the wind noise from the recordings, which scientists hope may prove useful for early warnings of distant eruptions and earthquakes.

• Science News Letter, 88:324 November 20, 1965

PALEONTOLOGY

Seven Ape-Like Teeth Indicate New Species

➤ SEVEN ISOLATED TEETH, uncovered in eastern Montana, have led to the identification of two new species of primates or ape-like creatures living about 70 million years ago.

The species belong to the new genus *Purgatorius,* named for the Purgatory Hill area where six of the teeth were found, report Drs. Leigh Van Valen of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, and Robert E. Sloan, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

Although the newly discovered species are more primitive than most primates, the scientists reported in Science 150:743, 1965, that some yet unknown member of this genus was ancestral to all other primates.

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Questions

ASTRONOMY—Why, possibly, did Comet Ikeya-Seki break up after it passed within about 300,000 miles of the sun? p. 325.

BIOCHEMISTRY—What berry native to Nigeria and Ghana transforms sour taste into sweet? p. 329.

MEDICINE—Which is the only truly malignant human tumor with definite hereditary characteristics? p. 327.

What biological properties do azaspirane derivatives exhibit? p. 326.

PHYSICS—What is involved in the new theory of how molecules stick to the surfaces of solids? p. 328.

PHYSIOLOGY—What newly discovered factor supports the theory that abnormal metabolism is associated with schizophrenia? p. 323.

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