1960 issue. The article is a conversation between a farmer and a soil scientist. The farmer's first question is: "What are you doing?" — "Making a soil survey of Bremer County," comes the reply. The farmer's last question is: "Why doesn't the government hire enough men to do the job in a hurry?" — "There are 2 reasons. For the present, at least, there isn't enough money available to employ more help. There are very few men who have both the desire and qualifications to be soil scientists." In the course of the interesting conversation in between these two questions, the soil scientist explains what a soil map is, and how it can be used, even to the benefit of the farmer who has been on his place for 30 years. F.D.H.

DR. KELLOGG WRITES TO SCIENCE

Dr. J.E. Kellogg wrote a most interesting letter to Science (p.206, Vol. 135, Jan. 20, 1961), commenting on the unwarranted assumption that hybrid corn alone accounts for record production. In part, he said:

"Our greatly increased efficiency during the last 20 years is clear evidence that successful American farmers have learned ... to develop proper combinations of practices to suit their soils.

"I am fully mindful and appreciative of the great contributions of plant breeders, but the apparent increases in yield due to hybrid seed would be only a fraction of what they are without improved fertilization, water management, and the other essential practices for producing a corn crop.

"On the dark-colored soils of the corn belt the hybrids gave an immediate response on many farms because of the excellent soils. But elsewhere it was much more difficult to get the same effect...

A.H. BEAVERS RECEIVES A $21,400 GRANT FROM THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION TO STUDY THE NATURE AND OCCURRENCE OF PLANT OPALS

Dr. A.H. Beavers, Associate Professor of Soil Mineralogy at the University of Illinois, Department of Agronomy, has recently received a $21,400 grant from the N.S.F. for a 2-year study of the nature of plant opals and their occurrence in soils and soil materials.

Plant opals or phytoliths are highly siliceous minerals formed in growing plants. Various plants differ in the nature and abundance of plant opals formed.

It is hoped, among other things, that the results of this study will be of value in the reconstruction of the vegetative landscape of existing and buried soils and in soil genesis studies.

A.H. FASCHALL TRANSFERS

My transfer on Oct. 3, 1960 to the job of Assistant Principal Correlator in the Northeast Region, with headquarters at Ithaca, N.Y., means that I work in 12 states (W.Va., Md. to Canada). In this region, the principal correlators' office participates in initial and final field reviews, and is responsible for intermediate correlations. The state soil scientists make field correlations. The real job here, as in soil survey everywhere, is to secure good soil series descriptions and descriptive legends. The Soil Science Institute program at Cornell University is a fine one, and S.O.S. soil scientists from all over the country are given a special, thorough course here.

A.H.P.