Your committee reports that some progress is being made towards a set of colors which may be used as standards in describing soils.

The chairman of the committee has examined the colors of a number of soils using a color top and a set of small Maxwell color disks. The color top operates on a single dry cell and is a very inexpensive piece of apparatus. It is not an instrument of precision, consequently determinations made with it are subject to some error. However, the difference in duplicate readings under the same conditions of illumination are surprisingly small.

Table I shows the record of several readings made from different soil samples. In making these readings the sample was first passed through a twenty mesh screen in order that all clods might be broken up. The soil was placed in an aluminum dish 35 millimeters in diameter by 5 millimeters in depth. The surface was then made as smooth as possible by using a spatula. The soil was in all cases air dry. The readings were made during the forenoon using light from a west window. The ground was covered with snow. A north light would have been preferable, but none was available. The window should have been open to eliminate the screening effect of the glass, but this was impracticable.

The colors used are those supplied with the color top and must not be regarded as standards. Black, white, red, and yellow were used and with these it was possible to duplicate the colors of the soils. The disks were rotated and different percentages were tried until a match was found. The sample of soil was held directly above the disks and as near them as possible.