

PREFACE

In recent years many persons have recognized the need for some means of bringing together all students of clay materials, whether they be mineralogists, ceramists, chemists, physicists, agronomists, engineers, or geologists, who are interested in and actually studying clay materials. The American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers held a symposium on Problems of Clay and Laterite Genesis during their meetings in St. Louis in 1951 which brought together for the first time a large number of students of clay materials from many different fields. Following the symposium a National Clay Minerals Committee was established which was charged with the task of finding some means whereby all students of clay materials might meet to discuss common problems and to obtain some coordination of their efforts.

After much deliberation the National Clay Minerals Committee decided the best way to approach its objective would be to set up an Interdivisional Committee on Clay Minerals within the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council to be administered by the Division of Earth Sciences of the Council. The Academy-Research Council welcomed this idea, and in 1953 such a committee was established with representatives from several other Divisions of the Council and from substantially all of the disciplines that are concerned with clay researches.

One way in which the Clay Minerals Committee is attempting to attain its objectives is by joining in the sponsorship of Annual National Clay Conferences. The first such conference was held at the University of California in Berkeley, California, in 1952, the second one is reported on herein, and a third one is planned for Houston, Texas, in October, 1954.

At the time of the meeting of the Eighteenth International Geological Congress in London in 1948, there was organized an International Committee for the Study of Clays (*Comité International pour l'Etude des Argiles*, CIPEA). Prior to that date national clay minerals groups had been organized in several countries, notably Great Britain and France. CIPEA was set up to attempt to coordinate researches and attack problems of classification, nomenclature, analytical procedure, etc., that require consideration on an international scale. The Clay Minerals Committee of the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council is affiliated with CIPEA. CIPEA sponsored clay meetings at the time of the Nineteenth International Geological Congress in Algiers in 1952 and plans to sponsor similar meetings at the Twentieth International Geological Congress in Mexico City in 1956.

The large attendance at the Berkeley and Columbia Conferences and the abundant discussions at these meetings attest to their success and the need

for them. Such Conferences involve much labor in their preparation and in their completion. In this connection we are indebted to the University of Missouri for the invitation to hold the Conference at Columbia and for making available excellent facilities. We are also indebted to Professor Walter D. Keller ably assisted by Ada Swineford and Norman Plummer for making arrangements for the Conference. The State Geological Survey of Kansas very generously made available some of its facilities for planning the Conference and for the editorial work. We are particularly indebted to Ada Swineford and Norman Plummer for their willingness to undertake the tremendous task of editing the Proceedings and for doing it so ably.

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