

of other related species in the Erythranthe section of *Mimulus*.

The Department of Embryology continued to explore the relation of the egg deoxyribonucleic acids to the somatic deoxyribonucleic acids of the eggs of *Xenopus laevis* and *Rana pipiens* and also the mechanism and site of action of actinomycin A in inhibiting the developing heart and somites in chick embryo. A mitochondrial factor was isolated which affords protection against anmycin and also prevents the action of antimycin in monolayer cultures of embryonic skeletal muscle. Evidence was obtained that myoblasts can be infected by Rous sarcoma virus. Experiments are in progress to determine the amount and rate of viral synthesis in muscle at each major point in its development and to compare the infectivity of muscle clones with clones of cartilage cells and with clones of fibroblastic cells. Studies of the fate of small fragments of radioactively labelled chick embryos transplanted orthotopically in unlabelled hosts showed that cells of the epiblast may be found in

autoradiographic preparations in sites approaching the primitive streak and leaving it and in the streak itself.

In the Genetics Research Unit, progress was made towards the completely accurate physical mapping of phage genes. Work on the structure and function of phage deoxyribonucleic acids showed that the deoxyribonucleic acid fragments in the defective bacteriophage T4 particles terminate at random points in the genome of the phage and that the deoxyribonucleic acid molecule and the genome are collinear. Experiments with phage lambda afforded a first physical description of the sequence in the activity of different parts of the phage genome, and other work in the Unit was concerned with the components of actin of the regulators *Spru* and *Ac* present in maize. The Cytogenetics Laboratory reports investigations of the fine structure of chromosomes, the mitotic cycle and deoxyribonucleic acid replication of *Haplopappus gracilis*, the deoxyribonucleic acid of mitotic chromosomes of *Drosophila* and the base composition of heterochromatic deoxyribonucleic acid in *Drosophila melanogaster*.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND

THE Royal Society of New Zealand Act, 1965, which came into force on January 1, 1966, consolidates and amends the previous Act of 1933. The Society was established as the New Zealand Institute in 1867 and had three primary functions. First, it provided scientists in New Zealand with an independent forum for scientific discussion, and an open channel for publishing their research findings and, secondly, it offered an independent and authoritative voice to the community and to the Government on scientific matters. Its third function was to act as a body through which New Zealand scientists were linked to the world organization of science, and it is the New Zealand section of the International Council for Scientific Unions.

From its inception, the Society has been federal in structure, linking the activities of regional scientific institutes or societies in the main New Zealand Centres. The new Act and constitution place the policy and control of the Society in the hands of the Fellows while retaining the links established with the member bodies. The Fellowship of the Society, established in 1919, is a self-perpetuating body, at present limited to one hundred scientists, and their part in administering the Society has hitherto been restricted to the appointment of two out of about thirty councillors.

Under the new Act, control of the Society is vested in a council of fourteen, of whom four officers and eight councillors are elected by the Fellows from among their number. The two other councillors represent the member bodies and are appointed by a Member Bodies Committee acting as an electoral college.

The objects of the Society are defined as to promote science, to encourage and stimulate high standards of scientific endeavour and achievement and to give recognition to notable achievements in the advancement of science in New Zealand; to inform the Minister of fields in which, in the opinion of the Council, the scientific effort of New Zealand should be increased, and to suggest how this may be done; to initiate and maintain contacts between New Zealand scientists and scientists in other parts of the world, especially through the unions of the International Council of Scientific Unions and other scientific bodies overseas; to administer funds for scientific research or scientific projects; to initiate meetings or participate in meetings of scientists in New Zealand; to initiate and maintain contacts between scientists in New Zealand, and provide liaison between co-relating efforts of its member bodies and other scientific bodies in New Zealand; and to publish and disseminate scientific knowledge and make available sources of scientific information. The present Council remains in office until the appointment of officers and councillors under the new Act at the annual general meetings of Fellows in May 1966, and one of the last acts of the Council was to adopt new rules which have now been published in the *New Zealand Gazette* of December 22, 1965. Besides the branches of the Royal Society itself, the member bodies listed in the first Schedule to the Act include the Auckland Institute, the Geological Society of New Zealand, the New Zealand Institute of Chemistry, the New Zealand Economic Society and the New Zealand Society of Soil Science.

BRITISH REPRESENTATIONAL SERVICES OVERSEAS

THE debate on a Ministry of External Affairs in the House of Lords on December 21 was opened by Lord Gladwyn, who asked whether the Government had now concluded that the time had arrived for establishing a single Ministry of External Affairs. After referring to the recommendation to this effect in the Plowden Report on Representational Services Overseas, Lord Gladwyn urged that it was now even more important for overseas matters to be handled by a single Ministry of External Affairs.

Lord Caccia supported him, and urged that all that had happened in the past 2 years strengthened the argument. He thought that the present pattern of events was unlikely to change.

Lord Inchyra, while agreeing with Lord Gladwyn, pointed out that the Foreign and Diplomatic Services had already been amalgamated and that the process seemed to be proceeding more smoothly than was anticipated; the time had come, he said, for change. Lord Sherfield also did not see why a single office should not be so organized as to avoid any additional burden on the Secretary of State. He was also supported by Lord Hankey, who thought that if the change was made it might be necessary to have an extra minister in the Foreign Office, though not necessarily a Cabinet Minister.

Lord Walston said that he had an open mind about the actual process of co-ordination of the two Offices, but he