Ethylene causes an increased rate of digestion of starch, which may make fruits sweeter, it causes changes in the cell wall materials just as in ripening fruits, it causes the disappearance of tannins and of organic acids to some degree, and increases protein cleavage. These same changes when occurring in fruits on the tree may be taken as evidences of ripening.

The work of E. M. Harvey, J. T. Rosa, R. P. Hibbard, W. A. Gardiner, and others than the parties to this controversy has proven that ethylene and some related compounds have remarkable effect on stimulating enzyme actions. These compounds act as coenzymes, if such a blanket term is permitted, for the hydrolytic enzymes and may act as hydrolytic catalysts themselves according to data by Rhea and Mullinix. The triple bond as in acetylene has a different action from the double bond of ethylene and propylene. The addition of elements at the double bond seems to destroy the action, except in some compounds which may yield ethylene. The formation of the oxide from ethylene destroys the effect. One is inclined to wonder if this catalytic action on hydrolyses is not a function of the double bond which may take on hydrogen and hydroxyl ions and again yield them easily to anhydrides. The surface tension effects, solubility in aqueous and lipoid phases, as well as the low molecular weight may give these double bond compounds properties not possessed by other such compounds found in plants.

I had been asked by two journals which have published articles in this controversy to write articles for them on the ethylene process. The data of value for commercial application had already been published sufficiently, and explicitly. I can see no reason why one should be required to publish before he is ready to do so. Charles Darwin would have had a slim chance of accumulating data for eighteen years if he had lived under our present system of reporting scientific results.

R. B. HARVEY

CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND

BANANA STOWAWAYS

IN reference to the note of Mr. L. A. Adams in SCIENCE of February 24, 1928, it may be of interest to record that in the summer of 1909 a laborer engaged in carrying bananas from a refrigerator car to a warehouse in Madison, Wisconsin, was terrified by having an animal leap from a bunch he had just placed on his shoulder, and attack his throat. The creature was captured and brought to our laboratory. It proved to be a female Marmosa, probably *M. murina,* and carried a litter of young on her back. The whole family was kept alive for some days, but eventually died of malnutrition. Twice in the last twelve years we have received specimens of a small boa snake, taken from banana bunches, one at Madison, and one at St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin.

GEORGE WAGNER

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

UNDER the above caption in SCIENCE for February 24, L. A. Adams mentions the finding of opossums of some species of the genus Marmosa in a bunch of bananas at Urbana, Ill.

I have in my collection two specimens of small opossums, each taken in Colorado Springs. One is *Marmosa cinerea,* and was found in a bunch of bananas about August 2, 1905. I saw an account of the capture in a local paper and secured the animal, keeping it alive for several days. Like Mr. Adams' animals it ate grasshoppers as well as other food. I was told that when caught it had a young one clinging to it, but that had disappeared before the animal came into my possession. The specimen was a female.

The other example, *Marmosa zeledoni,* is a skin given me by C. E. Aiken, October 5, 1912. He told me the animal was given him in the flesh by a man who had killed it in a commission warehouse, thinking that it was a rat. The type locality of this species is Navarro, Costa Rica, and doubtless the animal reached here with bananas. Both of these specimens were identified by the Bureau of the Biological Survey.

If my memory does not play me false, Victor Borcherdt, of Denver, told me that he had known of several instances of small tropical opossums being found in bananas in the city.

EDWARD R. WARREN

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLO.

GALILEI OR GALILEO?

WOULD it not be time to call the great Italian by his right name? He is always referred to as *Galileo.* But *Galileo* was his given name, while *Galilei* was his family name. The French and Germans have always referred to him as *Galilei.* Of course the objection will be made that this is a paltry matter and that the usage *Galileo* is time honored. Still it is wrong. How would it do, if we referred to noted men bearing the names William Williams or Samuel Samuels as William or Samuel?

A. KAMPMEIER

DAVENPORT, IOWA

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