

ing pertinent word from Dean L. E. Call, of the School of Agriculture of Kansas State College, in which he acknowledged my "letter of April 13, reporting on the yield of maple syrup from unpastured and pastured maple groves. The contrast is striking and is in complete conformity with the results that my brother has obtained where he has been protecting his grove from cattle for the last seven or eight years. Not only has the yield of sugar increased in his grove, but the condition of the trees is much better than it was at the time he started the practice. I spent a few days on his farm last August (the farm where I was born and raised) and I had never seen the maples in more thrifty condition than they were last summer."

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### THE MERITS OF ABSTRACTING JOURNALS

At the present time there are circumstances that give a special importance to abstracting journals. Part of the world's scientific literature, including some of the most used journals, is no longer accessible. Reprints of the articles are not distributed, and it has been difficult or impossible to find out what the publications are. As time has passed, since the beginning of the war, some sources have been found for certain otherwise unobtainable publications; but the limitations that exist preclude direct use of this by the ordinary scholar who is not fortunately situated.

In English and American serial publications titles and abstracts of some of this literature are appearing. They are scattered, often, in specialized bibliographic journals, and the coverage is necessarily incomplete and sporadic. Bibliographic agencies are in the best position to learn of and to make use of sources of the publications, if they are available anywhere; and by publication of titles and abstracts those agencies can

provide information that could be obtained otherwise only with much difficulty and expense.

*Biological Abstracts* is the only comprehensive abstracting journal for biologists in English; its significance to biologists can not be too much emphasized. Organization of the results of contemporary studies into compact, easily consulted form is one of the most important services that can be given to students and investigators; and an extensive index like that which is prepared for *Biological Abstracts* is a very valuable guide to this organization. In doing justice to the literature of the world on a subject, the specialized abstracting journals have an advantage in that their energies and facilities can more easily be adequate to cope with their undertaking. The main difficulty that hampers the work of such comprehensive journals as *Biological Abstracts* is that so much more in energies and facilities is required that it is difficult to provide. The accomplishment realized in that journal, however, in the relatively few years it has been published, shows that the energy and interest are abundantly present in its staff and in the large number of biologists who collaborate. There is clear understanding, too, of the problems that need to be solved, and elimination of imperfections awaits only the provision of increased support.

The interests of all who make use of the results of research in science will be furthered if the support of established abstracting journals is made sufficient not only to continue and improve the permanent values of organization of reports, but also to carry on to the fullest extent possible the dissemination of information concerning current scientific research in nations with which free communication is at present absent.

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## QUOTATIONS

### SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

IN war Britain has learned that to neglect science is to court disaster. Before the war scientific research was far too commonly regarded as an activity remote from life, the practitioners of which could not be expected to make important contributions to solving the country's manifold industrial, social and human problems. Too little public or private money was spent on research. Expenditure on agricultural research, for instance, amounted to only a fraction of 1 per cent. of the value of the total output from the land, although a more generous endowment would have repaid itself economically many times over. Or,

to take another example, research into the physical and psychological requirements of health in industry was hampered by lack of public interest and dearth of funds. Even more serious was the failure in far too many spheres of life to turn to practical ends the new knowledge which men of science were accumulating.

The basic facts about vitamins and food values were already well established when the Medical Research Council published its important report on "Vitamins: A Survey of Present Knowledge" in 1932. But very little was done, until the outbreak of war, to educate the public to a better appreciation of food values or to develop a food policy designed to counter