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The Content of SCIENCE

SCIENCE is a medium for brief but adequately documented reports of new discoveries and developments in every field of science. The dearth of articles in certain fields does not reflect a bias on the part of the editors, but rather the failure of some scientists to appreciate the fact that SCIENCE offers an outlet for quick publication of significant research before definitive articles can be prepared for, and published in, the specialty journals. SCIENCE is not in competition with the latter, and except for general articles of obvious importance or of interest to workers in two or more fields, long manuscripts dealing with specialized subjects are consistently referred to the appropriate specialty journals. As a rule, SCIENCE will not reprint anything that has been published elsewhere, although rare exceptions have been made to this practice.

The Editorial Board administers policies that are established by the Publications Subcommittee of the Executive Committee of the AAAS. Limitations are automatically imposed by financial considerations, which place restrictions on the number of pages that can be published; and by the character of the manuscripts received. So many of the latter come unsolicited that the composite of solicited and unsolicited articles creates a pattern from which it is difficult to escape, although an earnest effort is made to secure variety by inviting papers in fields that are inadequately represented. If SCIENCE seems to be a biochemical-medical journal, physicists, chemists, geologists, and biologists can readily correct the situation and restore the balance by submitting more papers in their respective fields. The Publications Committee and the Editorial Board will welcome, and cooperate to achieve, this result. We are particularly interested in obtaining scholarly, up-to-date surveys

of new developments of interest to scientists in many fields.

Approximately 1500 original manuscripts reach the editorial offices in the course of a year, and of this number less than half can be published. The editors do not impose arbitrary word limits on authors, but they favor articles that are brief and to the point; and so long as space is at a premium, they must restrict acceptance of manuscripts detailing laboratory methods and equipment unless the information imparted is important in a wide area of research. In general, technical papers are printed in order of receipt, but this rule is sometimes set aside to give priority to a paper that seems to possess unusual interest to workers in a certain field.

The effort to improve the journal is unremitting. Since 1951 there has been a substantial increase in the volume and coverage of News and Notes, and in the number of meeting reports. Page 3 and the weekly list of Meetings and Conferences have been added. Currently it is planned to increase the number and broaden the scope of articles of general interest, and to add to the news coverage and to the fields included in the technical papers.

The aim of everyone concerned with SCIENCE is to make it an indispensable American news magazine of world science. Readers and authors are urged to assist in achieving this aim, for it cannot be done unaided by a staff of only four full-time and two part-time employees, who must produce both SCIENCE and THE SCIENTIFIC MONTHLY. There are no reporters covering scientific events; hence it will help if readers will function as reporters—and if authors will become editors to the extent of adopting SCIENCE style and format in the preparation of manuscripts. SCIENCE is not so much what the Editorial Board and the editors would like it to be as what its contributors make it.

HOWARD A. MEYERHOFF

For the Editorial Board

SCIENCE, founded in 1880, is published each Friday by the American Association for the Advancement of Science at the Business Press, 10 McGovern Ave., Lancaster, Pa. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Lancaster, Pa., January 13, 1948, under the Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at the special rate postage provided for in the Act of February 28, 1925, embodied in Paragraph (d-2) Section 34.40 P. L. & R. of 1948.

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Annual subscriptions, \$7.50; single copies, \$.25; foreign postage, outside the Pan-American Union, \$1.00; Canadian postage, \$.50. Special rates to members of the AAAS.

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