

Letters

Lepeshinskaia

Readers of *Science* will be interested to learn that Lepeshinskaia, whose work was reviewed recently there (1), has been pressing her "anti-Virchowian thesis" since the early thirties. This thesis states that cells continuously originate from "undifferentiated organic matter" in such a way that living matter recapitulates, in ontogenesis, not only its phylo-

genetic cellular past but also the precellular phases of biochemical development which, eons ago, presumably led to the first appearance of living entities on earth. Her colleagues refused to take her seriously for the longest time. In the beginning, if they deigned to notice her at all, it was only to point out elementary defects in her laboratory technique and the like (2). How she managed not only to survive the contempt of her colleagues but to advance in spite of this to receive the official accolade in 1950 on behalf of her "dialectical materialist theory of cel-

lular development from undifferentiated organic matter" is a story that still awaits telling.

Lepeshinskaia has also been interested in the aging process and has advanced the notion that a 1-percent soda solution slows aging and has healing properties. She likewise believes that the solution increases harvest yields (3)! However, little of late has been heard of these extravagant claims. It should be noted that, although her theories were proclaimed as official, their effect has not been particularly baleful, in that *de facto* resistance to them has been in continuous evidence. Mindful of the genetics tragedy in the Soviet Union, one can easily exaggerate the harm wrought by Lepeshinskaia. But she was no Lysenko (4).

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References

1. L. N. Zhinkin and V. P. Mikhailov, *Science* 128, 182 (1958).
2. N. K. Kol'tsov, *Biol. Zhur.* 3, 255 (1934); B. Tokin, *Pod Znam. Marksizma* 16, 116 (1936).
3. O. B. Lepeshinskaia, *On Life, Age, and Longevity* (Znanie, Moscow, 1953).
4. I. D. London, *Bull. Atomic Scientists* 13, 169 (1957).

Author Listings in References

References to previous work in scientific reports facilitate the weaving of new facts into the fabric of our knowledge. Authors' names are an essential part of such references.

Science prints names of authors of quoted articles if there are three or less in number but uses the first author's name and "*et al.*" when there are more than three authors. This is a disservice to those interested in such articles. Author names in references are omitted in the text by some journals, often a questionable practice. Even in such instances all the authors are listed in the bibliography. To list all the authors neither in the text nor in the bibliography, as in *Science*, leaves the reference incomplete. It also prevents best integration of the new information.

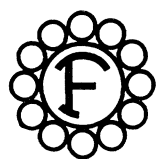
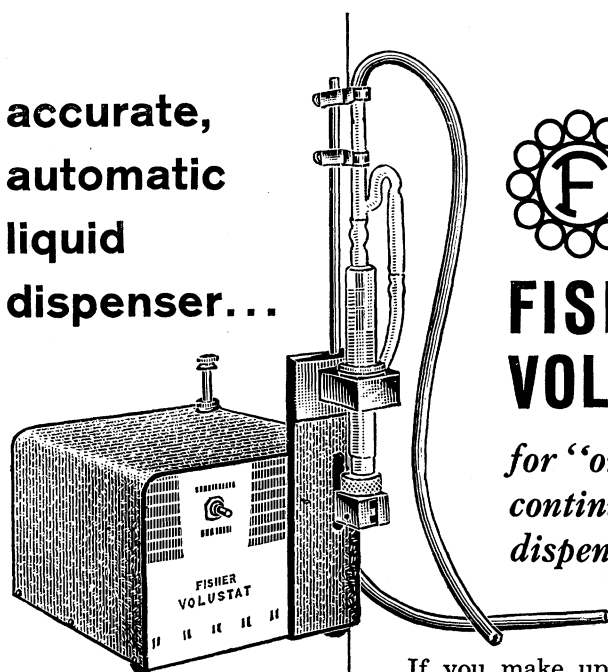
These are days of extensive cooperative and interdisciplinary research, with several workers attacking problems and publishing the results jointly. The choice of a senior author is often dictated only by the fact that one name, of necessity, must be first, and by no other consideration. Surely the printing of complete references by listing all authors will not put an undue burden on *Science*, which is otherwise so generous with space in its fine new typographical make-up.

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