are held below 0.2 deg. Transmitting specimens are mounted close to the instrument's projection lens either mechanically or by a vacuum-plate assembly. The instrument is designed to be used with the manufacturer's photometric unit. (Gardner Laboratory, Inc., Dept. Sci567, P.O. Box 5728, Bethesda 14, Md.)

■ PORTABLE TIME SOURCE is said to be accurate to approximately ±16 sec/yr. The instrument combines a battery-operated d-c clock with a transistor radio receiver designed to receive time signals broadcast by station WWV at 2, 5, or 10 Mcy/sec. Output of the receiver is fed to a decoder that eliminates all signals except the 1-second tick. The latter is applied to generate a pulse for synchronization of the clock. Output switching function signals are provided at 15, 30, 45, or 60 sec and at multiples of 5 min intervals up to 1 hr. Several months of operation are provided by self-contained batteries. (Zenith Radio Corp., Dept. Sci564, 6001 W. Dickens Ave., Chicago 39, Ill.)

■ STAINLESS-STEEL GAGE BLOCKS have hardness Rockwell C 68 to 70 and are said to resist nicking and burring four times better than steel blocks. Temperature coefficient is 5.75 μin./in. °F. Decimal sizes are available from 0.050 to 4.000 in., fractional sizes from 1/16 to 7/64 in. Accuracies quoted are: grade AA, ±0.000002 in.; grade A+, +0.000005 in., −0.000002 in. (DoAll Co., Dept. Sci560, Des Plaines, Ill.)

■ AUTOMATIC BURETTE FILLER can be used with standard 5-, 10-, 25-, or 50-ml open-top side-filling burettes and with any electrically conductive titrant. Pushing a button on a control box allows titrant to flow into the burette; the flow stops automatically when the titrant reaches a stainless-steel wire sensing probe placed at the zero level. No drains or overflow traps are required. (Coleman Instruments, Inc., Dept. Sci563, 42 Madison St., Maywood, Ill.)

■ SWITCHING TRANSISTOR is a silicon *npn* device said to have an average turn-on time of 4 mμsec while switching 40 watts peak power with an average power dissipation of 250 mw. Operating temperature ranges to 125°C. Parameters include emitter cutoff current varying from an average of 0.01 mμa to a maximum of 1.0 μa and avalanche voltage and collector to emitter voltage varying from 40 to an average of 70 volts. (Raytheon Co., Dept. Sci568, 215 First Ave., Needham Heights, Mass.)

JOSHUA STERN

National Bureau of Standards, Washington, D.C.

Letters

Aslib

Please permit me to point out an error in your amusing editorial "Claim to fame" [*Science* **131**, 1339 (6 May 1960)]. The abbreviation *Aslib* does not stand for "Association of Scientific Libraries" but stands for "Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux" and is therefore an abbreviation of the "pronounceable classic" rather than of the "hybrid" type.

KURT GINGOLD

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We Are for Extensive Contacts between Scientists

For almost 30 years I have been working at the Botanical Institute of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, where I head the department of plant taxonomy and geography.

Our Botanical Institute possesses the world's second-largest collection of plants, consisting of some 5 million herbarium mounts. Botanists from all over the Soviet Union and from many foreign countries come to work at our institute. Not long ago, for instance, several German scientists were here, while now we are playing host to Swedish scholars.

We maintain cordial relations with the famous British botanical garden, Kew Garden, and the Botanical Society of Edinburgh, which has honored me by electing me to honorary membership.

I am happy to note that our contacts with the United States have expanded markedly. We are receiving more and more letters and parcels from research establishments in New York, Missouri, Massachusetts, Iowa, and other states. Recently I received a letter from Leslie A. Garay, curator of the herbarium of Harvard University, thanking us for herbarium material and informing us that he was incorporating the data supplied in a monograph he was writing. For my part, I have just sent a letter of thanks to Dr. Lawrence of Ithaca, who presented me with a very valuable and well-compiled book, *The Taxonomy of Plants*, which we are using in our work. All this is very gratifying. But our exchange with the United States so far is characterized by thousands of herbarium mounts a year, while I recall that before the war it was much more extensive. We can and should expand our contacts.

We exchange plants, sending and receiving them for temporary use in sci-