Ninety-six percent of our respondents reported no medical debts, and exactly the same percentage was found by Steiner and Dorfman for 1951.

The most recent study of medical expenses of the aging known to us is based on data collected through the National Opinion Research Center. Odin W. Anderson, Patricia Collette, and Jacob J. Feldman, in "Family Expenditures for Personal Health Services" (Health Information Foundation, 1961), present findings comparable to our own. The "Profile" study showed that 97 percent of respondents had expenditures for physicians below $50 for one month, and that 2 percent had expenses above $50 but below $100. Anderson *et al.* found that 86 percent of their aged respondents had expenditures for physicians below $100 for an entire year. The "Profile" study showed that 95 percent of the respondents had no hospital expenditures in one month and that 3 percent had hospital expenditures below $100. Anderson reports that 86 percent of his aged respondents had no hospital expenditures in a year, and that 5 percent had hospital expenditures below $100. According to the "Profile" study, 98 percent of the aged had expenditures for medicines of less than $50 in a month, while Anderson reported that 88 percent had spent less than $100 for (prescribed) medicines in a full year.

If a few of our regional associates in the study, in response to a request from a subcommittee of the United States Senate, have felt it their duty to support the subcommittee, we may expect the data to be biased in favor of universal misery. If, in spite of the data they delivered and certified to us, some associates wish to believe that the aging are in a grave plight, it is a tribute to their professional competence and scholarly objectivity that they furnished the data as obtained by the interviewers. It has often been said that a chief mark of the scientist is that he even reports findings he does not like.

JAMES W. WIGGINS
HELMUT SCHOECK
Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia

Our reporter did try to contact Wiggins and Schoeck before publishing the news article. He telephoned Atlanta, but was unable to reach them. His report was based not on the press releases of the Senate subcommittee but on an examination of the letters in the files of the subcommittee; interviews with American Medical Association officials in Washington; the report, under the by-line of Wiggins and Schoeck in the Wall Street Journal *summarizing the findings of their study; and the A.M.A. press release interpreting their work.*—ED.

Degrees and Titles

This letter is a commentary on your most interesting editorial in *Science* [**133**, 441 (17 Feb. 1961)] entitled "A question of degrees." In 1920 the Society for the Rationalization of the Title of Doctor was organized at the University of Virginia and immediately received a great deal of favorable publicity. I would like to call your attention to the stand the society took at the time, but I have to rely on my memory alone. I believe the following numbered statements give the society's position.

1) The title of Doctor was to be limited to doctors of medicine, dentists, druggists, ministers of the Gospel, and Ph.D.'s of less than 1 year's standing, although, on occasion, it could be applied to a Ph.D. in either affection or derision.

2) The title of Professor was to be limited to high school teachers (male), to aviators giving exhibitions (they did in those days), and to any professional wrestler who owned a gymnasium and taught wrestling.

3) Any student who called a member of the faculty "Professor" was to be corrected on the spot.

4) All members of the faculty were to be called "Mister" (there were no female members), unless they taught in the Medical School. In this latter case it was just too much trouble to tell the M.D.'s and the Ph.D.'s apart, so they were lumped together and called "Doctor."

5) The president of the university should never be addressed as "Your Excellency."

The above standards have the virtue of being precise and definite. I admit that sometimes I am in doubt about the proper way to address a colleague—whether to call him "Doctor" or "Professor." I fear I take the easy way out and compromise. When in doubt I address him as "Colonel."

CONWAY ZIRKLE
Botanical Laboratory, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

Your editorial "A question of degrees" was a timely one. I was surprised, however, that you failed to take a stand on the issue. Members of the medical profession have been only too eager to appropriate the term *doctor* for themselves and fully exploit its value (even medical students are called "Doctor" in hospitals), and, due no doubt to various group pressures, the Washington *Post* has been following a highly discriminatory editorial policy under the very eyes of professional societies. Were it not for the lack of intelligent action by professional societies and for the timidity of some Ph.D.'s, the "question of degrees" would probably not have arisen in this country.

Incidentally, most surgeons and physicians in England are called "Mister" because, very simply, they do not have a doctorate. The minimum requirement for the practice of medicine in England is a Bachelor of Medicine degree similar to our Bachelor of Laws degree; the British M.D., which is higher than an American M.D., requires the completion of original research work and proof of many years of professional competence.

STEPHEN D. BRUCK
4401 East West Highway, Bethesda, Maryland

In your editorial "A question of degrees" you write, "The degree of doctor of philosophy was . . . modeled after the German Ph.D."

Some information, almost certainly well known to you, that you could have presented in the last half of your editorial is that common courtesy, almost anywhere in the world, indicates that an individual is most appropriately

addressed by his highest title. For example, the president of a university who once was a professor and who also had been granted a Ph.D. degree would be addressed in Germany as "Herr President," and if it was needful to repeat all of his titles, they would appear as "Herr President Professor Doctor." Discerning persons notice the impropriety of addressing a given individual as "Doctor" instead of "Professor" if he is entitled to both titles—provided, of course, there is intent to follow the German system.

The English title of Mister depends on matters nonacademic.

In summary, the problems that you pose might be answered in one way if the German system were followed and in another way if the British system were followed. It seems to me that there is no American system. If there is an American system, perhaps someone like you who has given thought to the matter ought to outline it. Those of us who are teachers might find it useful to have a recommended system in order to teach students in American universities how to avoid unintentional discourtesies.

E. RAYMOND HALL
Museum of Natural History,
University of Kansas, Lawrence

Loyalty Oath

Jack P. Hailman's letter regarding the loyalty oath [*Science* **133**, 251 (27 Jan. 1961)] reawakens a grave concern regarding the growing tendency of Americans (not only scientists) to shrink from an opportunity to reaffirm love for, belief in, and loyalty to their country. This tendency is approaching a stage of neurosis, or negative thinking, in which a loyalty oath is regarded as being as surely preliminary to adoption of the cloak of the Fifth Amendment as a Bach toccata is indicative of an impending fugue. Such concern was in no way allayed by the eloquent appeal of Bentley Glass on behalf of the resolution, adopted by the AAAS Council at the Chicago meeting in 1959, recommending elimination of this requirement for the grant of National Science Foundation fellowships.

I would suggest to Hailman that he might ponder whether a President-elect of the United States should feel, concerning the not dissimilar oath he is required to take at his inauguration, "How unnecessary!" It seems to me that, if one is loyal to his country, taking such an oath is the least undertaking he can make, and rather than regard it as an insult, he might better be willing to take the oath at every available opportunity.

On moral grounds it can be ques-