

ested in the quantitative approach to various problems of animal and plant physiology. As far as I know, he associated the rise of sap in tall trees with the pulling force generated by evaporation from the leaves. Does not Hales's principle underlie Dixon and Joly's as well as Askenasy's theory?

Almost a quarter of a millennium has passed since Hales attacked the problem which, as Scholander says, still challenges "the experimental ingenuity of future workers." It is worth while to remember that, according to Hales, our thoughts should carry us "a little farther than the plain evidence of experiments will warrant . . . otherwise we should make but very slow advances in future discoveries." Is it experimental ingenuity or ingenuity in conceptualization which now is needed most?

SIGISMUND PELLER
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Objectivity and Responsibility

I enjoyed and appreciated the editorial "The other fellows' ball park" [*Science* 134, 1163 (20 Oct. 1961)]. This touches one facet of a broader problem. I observe regretfully that certain elements of the scientific community are so absorbed in presenting the unprejudiced, objective viewpoint that they often do great damage to the democratic cause, usually by careless implication and omission. This is usually attributable to their being far better informed about the weaknesses of our own system than they are about the weaknesses of the competitive system.

Of late, *Science* has been particularly negligent about accepting responsibility for presenting a complete picture. For instance, in "Soviet defections: Conclusions of broad discontent unwarranted" ("Science and the news," 20 Oct.), the last paragraph is expressed exactly as I would expect it to be stated in a Russian newspaper, and no doubt Russian newspapers will quote this material verbatim.

Science and scientists cannot divest themselves of their national responsibility to consider the net effect of their expressions, particularly at this time when our own citizens and people the world over are keenly aware of the role of science in the present and future.

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Meetings

Microbiology in Latin America

The second Latin-American and the first Costa Rican national congresses of microbiology were jointly held from 10 to 17 December 1961, in San José, Costa Rica. The meeting was attended by about 300 participants from 16 nations, including 50 from England, Canada, and the United States.

Listed in the scientific program were

more than 150 titles, encompassing the following fields: general, medical, and veterinary bacteriology; immunology; helminthology; mycology; protozoology; virology; phytopathology; and agricultural and industrial microbiology. The greatest interest was expressed in medical microbiology. Abstracts of papers were published in a "General program and résumé"; many of the individual papers will appear in scientific journals.

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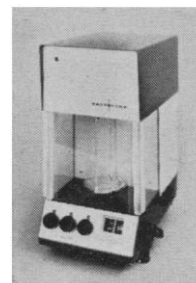
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