



Professor George Gamow

Mr Tompkins in Paperback GEORGE GAMOW

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ica wildlands are less used, less cared for, and less able to contribute to the practical and spiritual needs of people than they were a generation ago—this despite the enormous publicity that is being given to the outdoor recreation “industry” and the statistics of “visitor trips.”

To sum up, I suggest that the formal “conservation movement” must give way to a far broader approach to the reestablishment of functioning, ecologically balanced human communities within the landscape.

PETER VAN DRESSER

634 Garcia Street,
Santa Fe, New Mexico

. . . I should like to call attention to a unique approach to conservation problems which originated in Massachusetts. In 1957 the Commonwealth authorized the establishment of municipal conservation commissions. The members of the commissions, appointed by selectmen or mayors, are concerned citizens who serve without pay to protect and develop the natural resources of their own communities. Conservation commissions have proved to be one of the most effective ways to combat conservation problems at the local level. Since its beginning in Massachusetts, the conservation-commission movement has spread into Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island.

RICHARD E. LAFOND

5 Pleasant Street,
Monson, Massachusetts

Abelson suggests that we “give over much of the areas of our parks to wilderness, letting nature take its course, while observing closely what is happening [and] and at the same time . . . devote limited areas to controlled experimentation.” Such projects might readily fire the imagination of many scientists. A joint field team in the earth and biological sciences might possibly be given a grant for an area 10 miles on a side. The chosen site might then be evacuated, if necessary, and isolated (much like the “reserves” in Huxley's *Brave New World*). If a restricted part, let us say a tenth, of this area were available for experimentation and the remainder were not entered but observed by long-range techniques, a tremendous study potential would be created.

Such a project would be a long-term proposition requiring the time of

many scientists and with cumulative expenses possibly comparable to those of the 200-GeV machine for high-energy physics. The problems of site selection and assignment of research facilities might also be as complex as those that have arisen with that machine (see *News and Comment*, 17 Dec., p. 1566). Unfortunately, the idea does not have a major government agency like the AEC behind it. Thus we may have to depend on the proliferation of inadequate projects to meet the need, unless on some common meeting ground—perhaps the AAAS—the applicable sciences can draw up a bolder scheme to make such a study on earth as feasible and productive as our efforts to strike out into the heavens.

ARTHUR R. LEPLEY

1572 Upland Road,
Huntington, West Virginia

Prohyphen

If Morris Leider (“Antiunion,” 10 Dec., p. 1408) wants to found a Society for the Preservation of the Hyphen, I will promise to become a charter member. . . . If to accomplish clarity in scientific writing we must flout convention, I say flout it! What is to happen to “un-ionized” without its protective hyphen? I have nothing against an unhyphenated “subconscious,” but when it comes to “subunit,” my subconscious refuses to disassociate the word from buns. . . .

May I also put in a good word for the diaeresis? If our microbial friends are not to be allowed to be micro-organisms, may they not at least be microörganisms, to spare them from becoming mic-roor’ganisms? Unlike the hyphen, this at least requires no extra space.

STEWART A. BROWN

Trent University,
Peterborough, Ontario, Canada

New Russian Journal in Genetics

The first issue, dated July 1965, of a new journal called *Genetika* (not to be confused with the Dutch journal of the same name) recently reached me from the U.S.S.R., having been sent me by one of the two assistant editors who is well known to me both personally