the music of Beethoven will soon be an incomprehensible curiosity. If there is one thing that our age of electronic technology has done, it is to bring the symphonies of Beethoven to new millions of people, whose enjoyment shows no signs of abatement. Iltis finds cacophony in the music of Roger Sessions. But 150 years ago, the music critics objected to the dissonances in Beethoven's First Symphony, until 10 years later the turbulent music of the *Eroica* produced a new wave of complaints by other critics who then said that the earlier First Symphony was a model of formal excellence. Is it possible that these critics of Beethoven were the prototypes of Iltis?

Iltis doubts whether Dobzhansky remembers "what it was like to walk the dunes in solitude or to swim in the ocean." One might get a better idea of Dobzhansky's familiarity with solitude by attempting to retrace the remote montane journeys made by that redoubtable pursuer of *Drosophila pseudoobscura.*

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Reference

1. R. H. Torrey, F. Place, Jr., R. L. Dickinson, *New York Walk Book* (American Geographical Society, New York, ed. 3, 1951), p. 301.

Can Aldabra Be Protected?

The proposed establishment of a joint U.S.–British communications center on the island of Aldabra between the northern tip of Madagascar and the African mainland demands that United States biologists act promptly under the auspices of the International Biological Program (see Revelle's editorial, 24 Feb., p. 957). This island is a veritable zoological curiosity shop which should be preserved in its natural state. The 60-square-mile (155.4 km^2) atoll is virtually a living natural history museum, the home of an almost extinct giant land tortoise (*Testudo gigantea*) and of rare birds such as the red-footed booby and the flightless rail.

As long ago as 1871 Charles Darwin and others became involved in a similar (and successful) effort to prevent commercial development on the island. It is only one of two locations in the world where these great land tortoises still exist. In addition, about 10 percent of the approximately 170 species of plants on the island are found nowhere else.

Apparently the British and American governments want this island for a radio and tracking station, serviced by a 9000-foot (2.74-km) landing strip. Only about 100 people currently inhabit the island—certainly a fraction of the number that would arrive with the development of the communications center. It should be possible to locate these facilities elsewhere, either by contract with mainland nations, such as Tanganyika, or with the island of Madagascar, or on other islands to the east. It is suggested that the National Academy of Sciences join the Royal Society in Britain (which has already started to work on this problem) in urging their governments to select another site. While these negotiations may require unusually complicated international scientific cooperation, they would be worth every effort if the unique fauna and flora of this island are to be protected.

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Rite of Penitence

Ethical problems involved in animal research have been discussed in *Science* from time to time. You might, therefore, be interested in the following item from *The Korea Times*, Seoul, Korea, of 30 May 1967:

A memorial service will be observed today at the National Institute of Health for animals killed in a series of medical experiments. Before the tombs of the animals, Buddhist monks will recite sutras and a celebrant will burn incense and offer wine, while the officials of the institute pay tribute to the memory of the animals. The service for the animals, according to Dr. Yu Il-pyong, director of the animal division, is aimed at assuaging the officials' sense of penitence over killing "innocent animals" rather than to console the dead animals.

"The workers here seemed to think that, by holding a memorial service, they can convince themselves they did not kill the animals out of malicious intention," said Dr. Yu.

The National Institute of Health, located in Pulgwangdong, conducts medical experiments on about 50,000 animals a year. Some are used to get preventive medicine and others for curative medicine.

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