

1639 to Galileo's death in 1642. In 1639 Viviani was seventeen years old.

No account by Galileo himself is to be found in the Edizione Nazionale of his works, if the elaborate index is to be trusted. Further as Gerland, "*Geschichte der Physik*," p. 316, 1913, points out, Galileo in his treatise "*De Motu*," which dates from the time of his readership in the University of Pisa, cites experiment from a high tower as proving that wood at the beginning of its fall moves more rapidly than lead, but that a little later the lead will pass the wood and will precede the wood by a great space. Galileo further states, "and on this I have made experiment frequently."<sup>4</sup>

Renieri (born in 1606, knew Galileo from 1633 to 1642 and during that time wrote Galileo at least sixty letters) wrote a letter to Galileo dated March 13, 1641,<sup>5</sup> in which he gives an account of some experiments performed by Renieri from the leaning tower of Pisa. Renieri dropped a sphere of wood and one of lead the same size; on reaching the ground the lead was three "*braccia*" ahead of the wood. He also dropped a cannon ball and a musket ball and on reaching the ground the cannon ball was a palm ahead. Renieri makes no reference to Galileo's experiments, which is difficult to explain except on the ground that he had never heard of them.

Realizing the slippery nature of historical deduction, I draw no conclusion except this, that we do not know exactly what experiment Galileo performed from the leaning tower.

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#### THE BOOMING LIZARD OF AUSTRALIA

In July, 1913, I was hunting in the Cove's River Ranges with two companions—Andrew and John Duncan, of Megalong. We found a black-and-yellow banded monitor lizard about five feet long concealed in a crevice on the face of a wall. We had no intention of injuring him, but out of mischief Andrew

Duncan suggested that we should make him yell. I was sceptical, but both men assured me that the lizard could, and would yell under persuasion. On condition that there should be no cruelty, I consented to a demonstration. They laughed at the idea of cruelty. Andrew picked up a stick and began poking the reptile in the ribs and tickling him under the arm. It stood it for a while, merely squirming closer down in the crevice, then, having had enough of it, blew himself out and emitted a most comically doleful bellow that could be heard several hundred yards away. This he did repeatedly until we had laughed ourselves tired. It was funny, on looking back after we had gone fifty yards, to see the lizard stick his head around the corner to make sure that we had really departed.

I have had for the last four years at my hunting-box on the Naltai River, a tame monitor whom I have called "*Joseph*" on account of his coat of many colors, and who is the interesting companion of my solitude—and incidentally keeps the snakes away. With the above in my mind, I experimented on him. I found him camped under the bench beneath the window, and irritated him with the end of a stick. He did as the other had done—filled himself with wind and then emitted it in a prolonged bellowing groan. By the way, our "*bookbook owl*" does much the same thing. He fills himself nearly to bursting in a succession of gasps, and then says "*Hoo-hoo hoo*" till he has no more breath, then fills up again.

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#### QUOTATIONS

##### THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION

THE British Association begins its annual meeting at Cardiff to-day. Our correspondents report that the increase in railway fares has not reduced the attendance below that of a fair average, and that the arrangements made for the housing of the visitors and the accommodation of the sectional meetings are excellent. By a useful innovation the daily

<sup>4</sup> Op. Ed. Naz. I., 334.

<sup>5</sup> Op. di. Gal. Ed. Naz., 18, p. 305.