

CORRESPONDENCE

Rapid Publication

SIR,—Your editorial, "Publish and Be Damned a Second Time," is of especial interest because of the experience we had in the US space programme. The answer you arrived at on the question of newspaper reports *vis-à-vis* scientific journals was "publish quickly". This may be the only course for the journals.

In December 1962 the results of the Mariner spacecraft which had journeyed to Venus were ready for dissemination but the scientists involved made a strong case against a press conference until articles could be published in scientific journals. This meant delays of weeks or months and a rather haphazard way to release results from a number of related experiments.

An internal struggle in NASA with the public affairs people arguing for timely release of data (gathered at the taxpayers' expense) versus scientists who

insisted on reporting first—and surely not *via* the news media—to the scientific community ensued.

A compromise was worked out using *Science* magazine as a base: press conferences such as the Mariner would be held on the publication day of the magazine. Letters would be submitted, stating the urgency of the matter, to *Science* on a Monday, prearranged immediate attention would be given the letter, publication of preliminary results accepted (or rejected) for that very week and a press conference could be arranged Thursday or Friday. The experimenter would state to the news media that the preliminary results to be presented had been submitted for publication. Acceptance for publication in these cases meant immediate publication, not acceptance today and actual publication months later. Additional later publication of refined results appeared often in other journals, including *Nature*. The experimenter

afforded himself protection under this procedure with two *caveats*: publication and the word "preliminary".

As a result, the practice has become increasingly more liberal and, although there have been a few faint cries of "instant science", now the real time reporting of (preliminary) scientific results from space probes has become a practice. Viewers will see in the current Mariner 9 Mars probe real time interpretation of Mars television pictures and press conferences throughout the encounter phase without regard to publication. Publication will come later when careful analysis with all the data is available.

Yours faithfully,

JULIAN SCHEER

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Announcements

University News

Dr D. L. Lee, Houghton Poultry Research Station, has been appointed professor of agricultural zoology and **Dr A. Care**, Rowett Research Institute, has been appointed professor and head of the Department of Animal Physiology and Nutrition, in the **University of Leeds**.

Dr G. Edsall, Harvard School of Public Health, has been appointed to the chair of microbiology, tenable at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and **Professor J. F. M. Middleton**, New York University, has been appointed to the chair of African anthropology, tenable at the School of Oriental and African Studies, **University of London**.

Dr David Evans, University of Sheffield, has been appointed to the new chair of computing in the Department of Mathematics, **Loughborough University of Technology**.

Professor R. H. Tuck has been elected dean of the Faculty of Agriculture and Food at the **University of Reading**.

Miscellaneous

Representatives of university departments and other qualified organizations and scholars are invited to apply for

grants in aid of archaeological research to be carried out in the county of Somerset during 1972. The grants will be allocated from the **Maltwood Fund** by the Royal Society of Arts, and will total £1,000. Further information can be obtained from **J. S. Skidmore**, Royal Society of Arts, John Adam Street, Adelphi, London WC2N 6EZ.

Applications are invited by the **Lalor Foundation** for the 1972 postdoctoral awards, offered for research in certain aspects of mammalian reproductive physiology. This year preference will be given to work which is aimed at detection and exploration of dysgenic factors in ovum or foetal development, evaluation of the genetic factors involved and means towards their disposition. Research on non-traumatic cervical dilation and on various aspects of abortion will also be considered. Applicants may be of any nationality but should be under 41 years of age. The research may be undertaken at the applicant's own laboratory or elsewhere. Further information and forms of application can be obtained from the Lalor Foundation, 4400 Lancaster Pike, Wilmington, Delaware 19805, USA. The closing date for applications is January 15, 1972, and awardees will be notified on or before March 15, 1972.

233, 17; 1971), the last sentence of the second paragraph under the subheading "Causation, Correlation, Classification", page 19, should read: "Even though this is all the information I possess about you, it enables me to make a statement about your height, thus: the probability that you are between 5 feet 8 inches and 5 feet 8.5 inches tall is 0.08, if I take as my datum the fact that Englishmen are normally distributed in height with a mean of 5 feet 8 inches and a standard deviation of 2.5 inches".

IN the article "Inhibiting Effect of Some Antimalarial Substances on Glucose-6-Phosphate Dehydrogenase" by **D. W. K. Cotton** and **A. H. M. Sutorius** (*Nature*, 233, 197; 1971), the second figure in the first column of Table 1 (NADP 0.002 M in buffer (ml.)) should read 0.01. Moreover, the name of the second author is incorrectly spelt in the contents list.

IN the News and Views article entitled "Fooling the Experts" (*Nature*, 232, 442; 1971), the implication that the Basel Museum has purchased or is in possession of forged Etruscan paintings on terracotta is incorrect. The plaques in question only passed through the museum for examination when their authenticity was already in doubt. The Munich plaques are in a private collection. The Berne plaque is in the possession of the Archaeology Seminar of the University of Berne. There are genuine Etruscan plaques in the British Museum, the Louvre and the Villa Giulia Museum in Rome.

Errata

IN the article "Science, Statistics and Society" by **A. W. F. Edwards** (*Nature*,