

and often explored what turned out to be the blind alley of lattice theories. With hindsight, however, the reintroduction of the ideas of the van der Waals era can be plotted in more precise form. No exact priorities can be given but, in outline, the timetable runs as follows: Taylor expansions about critical points (1935, 1937 (refs 88 and 89)), the theory of the pair distribution function (1935 (ref. 90)), of surface tension (1937 (ref. 70)), 1948 (refs 74–76), 1949 (ref. 71), 1958 (ref. 73), of conformal potentials and corresponding states (1938–1939 (refs 68 and 69)), non-lattice theories of mixtures (1951 (ref. 84)), 1962 (ref. 82), 1968 (ref. 83), the direct correlation function (1953 (ref. 91)), and perturbation theories of pure fluids (1954 (ref. 58)), 1963 (refs 42–45), 1964 (ref. 59), 1967 (refs 60 and 61). Other ideas, not discussed here, have played at least as important a part in the current renaissance of liquid state physics, but in the papers cited above one can see the true legacy of van der Waals and his school.

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Cover Cartoon

The cover illustration of this issue of *Nature* depicts the British Association for the Advancement of Science as seen through the eyes of a *Punch* cartoonist in September 1865 when the association held its annual meeting in Birmingham. At that time, Sir Roderick I. Murchison, who is seen conjuring in the foreground of the cartoon, was President of the Geology Section. Presumably Professor T. H. Huxley and Dr Richard Owen are the two gentlemen embracing each other.

Identification this far is easy, but the names of the remaining

scientists pose problems. Who indeed are the geologists demonstrating, before their time, the subtleties of plate tectonics? And who is that brandishing what looks suspiciously like a red hot poker? The caption to the cartoon poses a problem as well. "The British Association illustrated by experimental conjuring (a box of tricks packed up in a large clothes-basket for doing the Stodare trick. Swords separate.)" Who or what was Stodare? The first reader to convince the Editor—by letter—that he can identify the scientists and also interpret the caption will receive a free subscription to *Nature* for a year.