

Thomas P. Sheahen, of Morristown, N.J., writes to point out that during the current economic crisis facing science those who seek to make science appear more "relevant," and hence drum up more support, have been taking a wrong approach. Instead of attempting to show that basic science contributes in the long run to the economic strength of business, Sheahen thinks it would be better to show that, on a day-to-day basis, science operates in just the same way as the business community. To do this we need a new journal, composed of day-to-day results, written in the style to which the financial community has become accustomed. Here is Sheahen's example of a typical day's entry:

Yesterday was a day of active experimentation in Physics, with losers outnumbering gainers by a wide margin. The mass of the electron continued its steady decline, falling to a new low of 9.05. Among the most widely held issues, Avogadro's number inched up slightly under increasing pressure, despite a firm government-imposed lid on absolute temperatures.

The Dow Jones average of 30 fundamental constants held steady, owing to a continuing rise in the speed of light to a new high of 2.998.

The market was rocked at the opening by a sharp plummeting of Planck's constant, when 735 independent measurements showed it to be 5.3×10^{-34} , some 20% below Wednesday's close. This touched off a flurry of experiments in such related issues as the charge on the electron and the hyperfine splitting of hydrogen. However, by midday confidence was restored when it was revealed that all 735 measurements were made by Stanford freshmen, at a time when the linear accelerator had reduced the local line voltage from 115 to 92 volts. Professor Spender D'Oro, head of the Institute for the Absorption of Federal Funds, stated that under no circumstances would his agency consider devaluing the fine structure constant. By the closing bell, Planck's constant was within 0.1 of its earlier value, the slight drop being attributed to residual bias by Stanford alumni.

The International Association of Air Polluters announced the discovery of 837 new lines in the spectrum of gasoline. The group noted that a prospectus and offering would be made for new issues in CN , NO^+ , CN_2 , NO_3 , CO^+ , NO_4 , N_2CO , and C_2N . A spokesman for the group stated that the separate issues were in line with the government's anti-conglomerate attitude; however, Professor Conclusio Invalio of the Bureau of Profound Balderdash doubted that the prospectus would be admitted, since the offering consisted entirely of eight unstable radicals, which are out of favor on this exchange.

Three new mesons opened on the big board today, with mean masses of 233, 682, and 1019 electron masses. The consortium of Universities sponsoring this research voted overwhelmingly to name them the Nationalon, Sciencon, and Foundaton, a move which prompted speculation that their contract was in danger of non-renewal. By mid-afternoon, the Foundaton had fallen to 937; trading was then halted in this issue as rumors of a possible merger with Universal Baryon began to spread.

News from the interplanetary market caused another erratic fluctuation in Hubble's constant: Galaxy NGC 602, registered with the Stars and Expansion Commission as having a red shift of 0.95, dropped to 0.91 overnight. Despite the assertion of validity of this change by the prestigious brokerage house of Wilson and Palomar, the corresponding change in Hubble's constant was opposed by several market

specialists, most notably the theoretical team of Tremor, Shake and San Andreas. Dr Fred Wobble, curator of the National Gallery of Cosmologies, stated that it might be necessary to maintain two Hubble constants, one for formal interplanetary transactions and one for free market speculation.

The most active issue of the day was the perihelion of Mercury, which closed unchanged at 43 despite heavy upward pressure from several theorists. A transaction of 6×10^{23} shares was handled by the brokerage house of Brans, Dicke and Jordan, who offered no explanation for the sudden activity.

Scientists of the early 19th century did not let wars interfere with their international comings and goings. We read in Early Electrodynamics, by R. A. R. Tricker (Pergamon, Oxford, 1965) that in 1813 Sir Humphrey Davy, accompanied by Michael Faraday, was able to visit Paris in the middle of the Napoleonic war to talk things over with their French counterparts (Ampère, Gay-Lussac, Humboldt, ...).

"They travelled freely across France and into Italy," writes Tricker, "and they do not appear at any time to have taken particular pains to temper their language to suit the politics of the country in which they found themselves. It is recorded that after a tour of the Louvre, where were collected masterpieces pillaged from half the capitals of Europe, Davy remarked: 'What an extraordinary collection of fine frames.'" □

