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Letters

Hot ice?

In "A grazing view of melting" (SN: 2/4/89, p.77) you state that "ice always melts at 0°C; it can't be 'superheated.'" Do you know for sure that this is true, that no one has ever made superheated ice because it is physically impossible — as opposed to merely difficult — to do so?

Buried within a paper published more than a century ago by John Henry Poynting in THE PHILOSOPHICAL MAGAZINE, one finds the following tantalizing statement:

If we have a piece of ice at any temperature and allow no water to form on its surface, then I see no reason why it should melt if heat be supplied to it by conduction from bodies which, when melted, it does not wet. I think, then, we ought to expect its temperature to rise, as Dr. Carnelly has apparently found to be the case.

The conditions specified by Poynting under which superheated ice might be formed

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Cover: Investigators digging into a Late Iron Age site in Germany are turning up clues to the development of one of temperate Europe's first cities. A cast bronze coin found at the site depicts a horse in an art style typical of central and western Europe in the first few centuries B.C. (Photo: Peter S. Wells)

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Excavation clarifications

Some of the statements made in "Grave findings at ancient Mexican site" (SN: 12/17/88, p.388) do not fit the facts. A group of students at our National School of Anthropology excavated, under my supervision, the mass grave pit located on the north side of the Quetzalcoatl Pyramid in the Citadel. To the east is an individual grave with the skeleton of a woman. The skeletons found at these sites are under study by physical anthropologist Maria Elena Salas Cuestas. I should like to have your readers know the following:

(1) The article states that "in 1986 Mexican archaeologists uncovered another pit containing several dozen skeletons." The 1986 finding included 19 skeletons, not "several dozen."

(2) I consider it unwise for the scientific

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