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To speed up insertion, address classified advertising . . . Classified Ads, Science News, 1719 N Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036.

BOOKS

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(Letters from p. 228)

dent or high school graduate, I would rate these articles generally difficult or incomprehensible, in the Aug. 10 issue: page 136, estrogens; 137, plasma; 138, laser and Sommerfeld constant; 139, superconductivity. All of these require knowledge of both vocabulary and concepts involved. As to sentence length, there are far too many sentences of 30 or more words. These occur at random in many articles. A statistical analysis would make it possible for your writers to present all articles on a predetermined level of difficulty. Your present policy of presenting a few articles for a specialized part of your readership is probably better, if a balance is kept.

Victor C. Smith
Monmouth, Ore.

(The Aug. 10 issue carried 34 articles, not counting Letters to the Editor, Books and Films. Mr. Smith contends that four were difficult to read. Three of these were very brief articles, only a few paragraphs long and of a type that must often be highly specialized. Many readers might skip such notes, but would still have 30 articles of various lengths which, by Mr. Smith's standard, as well as ours, should indicate balance. Ed.)

Was Franklin first?

Sir:

Benjamin Franklin certainly charted the Gulf Stream nearly 200 years ago (SN: 7/20, p. 54), but was he the first? The first president of (the Commonwealth of) Pennsylvania deserves credit for poring over the logs of sailing ships to find ocean currents, but the first Governor of Florida should have a bit of credit for plotting the return route to Spain for the treasure ships from Panama—right over the Gulf Stream.

It is curious that both Ponce de Leon and Franklin were more landlubber than sea captain. Perhaps some things are better seen with others' observations.

Charles T. Hoard
Consulting Engineer
Oakland, Calif.

Map colors

Sir:

I would greatly appreciate details of how the four-color map problem has been solved (SN: 7/27, p. 89).

Robert W. Mack
Cambridge, Mass.

(Details are contained in the June issue of the PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, as noted in our brief account. Ed.)

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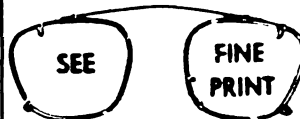
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Dept. SNP
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THINGS OF SCIENCE

c/o Science News, 1719 N St., N.W.
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