

## FANCY BECOMES FACT WHEN PROVED

Editor The Chronicle—Sir: Thanks to Chester Rowell for his comments on that "Ray" hypothesis or phantasm of mine. There is no limit to fancy, and what a dull world this would be without it. Our libraries would be fairly empty if literature was limited to hard, terse fact and omitted all theorems, hypotheses and fancies of every sort. Even the very erudite Dr. Millikan cautiously resorts to fancy in the explanation of his "cosmic ray."

It is possible that Dr. Millikan is aware, and Mr. Rowell also, that the hypothesis he builds up on his discovery is very ancient indeed, as old literature in my possession proves. Whether those ancient "phantasists" knew as much about it as the modern "hypothesisists" or merely imagined vain things, will probably never be solved to the satisfaction of the doubter. Fundamental facts are few and hard to get at.

I want to confess my hypothesis was nothing new; just as ancient as Millikan's. "There is nothing new under the sun"—merely new phraseology for old ideas. The big mistake some make in reading scientific literature is that they confound the fact in the experiment with the fancy in the hypothesis or theorem. OLE J. SNEIDE.

San Francisco, Sept. 7, 1928.