SCIENTIFIC NOTES

AN UNUSUAL PHOTOGRAPH

T. D. MULHERN

Just recently in printing some old negatives of photos which I made in 1954, I came across the negative of the print reproduced below which I had never previously printed. After making a print, I was pleased and surprised to see that this particular shot shows very plainly the engagement of the tip of the larval siphon with the surface of the water—a view which I have never before captured. Usually the meniscus formed at the point of contact between the glass of the cell and the surface of the water obscures this view so that it is lost. Of all the larval photos I have made, this group is the only one which shows the siphon actually extending through the surface of the water. I thought you might like to have a print of this.

The larvae were taken from the fountain in the courtyard of the Ventura Mission, and the species was *Culiseta incidens*.

There is an interesting and true tale connected with this. The larvae were taken on the occasion of my first visit to this Mission, when I was just passing through on another assignment. After finding the larvae and knowing that there is no regular mosquito control program in the area, I thought it would be a nice gesture to tell the padres about the mosquitoes and then give them a suggestion for control. So I knocked at the door and was admitted by a most genial Irish mission priest, one with a thick Irish brogue, who was about 80 years old I would guess and about 5 feet tall. He most pleasantly asked me to come in and when we had exchanged introductions he asked what I wanted. As I began to explain about the mosquitoes, he laughed heartily and said in a good natured way "Now son, do not be troubled at all, at all. We have bats in the eves of the roof and they do keep the gnats from bothering a body." I'm still amused every time I think of this!—T. D. M. [*Ed. note:* One of our reviewers writes: "This photo will set off a minor controversy. Air tube *may* project above water, but photo *may be* mirage effect, in part, since air tube (in most species) is believed not to pass through surface film"].