

then the three departments (schools of mathematics, economics and politics and humanistic studies) had been scattered over the campus of the university and the town of Princeton.

The School of Mathematics of the Institute is devoted to research work in mathematics and theoretical physics. It consists of a permanent staff of six professors and one associate, their assistants and a varying number of temporary members, both from this country and abroad, some of whom receive stipends from the Institute.

The new building provides office space for the permanent and temporary members, room for the collections of the humanistic school and space for a research library. The School of Mathematics has started to build up its own library, which is intended to cover both mathematics and mathematical physics, and is prepared to buy second-hand books and sets of periodi-

cals from private owners and duplicates from other libraries. Offers addressed to The Library, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, N. J., will receive careful consideration.

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RECORD OF CHEMICAL PROGRESS

COPIES of the January, 1939, issue of the *Record of Chemical Progress* were sent to members of Section C of the A.A.A.S. because they contained preprints of the papers to be given at the Richmond meeting. There is an unusual demand for this issue; hence, any copies returned to the secretary will be deeply appreciated, and postage will be refunded.

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SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

ENGLISH DIET

The Englishman's Food; A History of Five Centuries of English Diet. B. J. C. DRUMMOND and ANNE WILBRAHAM. 574 pp. with appendix. London: Jonathan Cape.

THIS book represents an attempt, according to the authors, "to present a picture of the changing character of the English diet during the past five centuries against a background of social and economic history." As such, it is unique among histories of nutrition. It is dedicated to William Stark (1740-1770), a martyr to the experimental study of foods, himself as subject (p. 286). It is of interest to American readers to learn that Stark "was diverted from anatomical studies with John Hunter to the study of the functions of foods as the result of a chance conversation with Benjamin Franklin, who at the time was in London on one of his political missions." This is but a sample of the wealth of interesting historical detail to be found in this book.

The outline of the book in 5 parts and 25 chapters is in the main chronological, but the historical journey is interrupted by pleasant interludes dealing with modern concepts of nutrition. For example, in discussing diet and health previous to the seventeenth century, it is noted that for the English peasant a great deal depended on the amount of "white meats," *i.e.*, milk, whey, cheese and eggs, which was eaten. Then follows an account of the recent experiments of Dr. Corry Mann on behalf of the Medical Research Council of Great Britain, showing the benefit of adding milk to the basic diet of a boys' institution, which provided rather small proportions of animal protein, fat and

insufficient green vegetables. Further consequences of a diet lacking in dairy products in those times are discussed at this point in terms of vitamins.

Reviewing the seventeenth century writings of Burton ("Anatomy of Melancholy"), Samuel Pepys ("Diary"), John Evelyn ("Diary"), Thomas Muffet ("Health's Improvement"), Robert Boyle ("Medical Experiments") and others, the authors conclude that "all classes, rich and poor alike, were insufficiently protected against scurvy." An entire chapter (VII) is devoted to this disease at this point, particular attention being given to the origin of methods for its treatment. "All the evidence points to the English having learnt about scurvy from the Dutch sailors during the period of great voyages which started with Vasco de Gama's discovery of the West African Coast in 1498." Referring to the expedition of Jacques Cartier to the "backside of Newfoundland" in 1535 and the remarkable cure which he found for scurvy, the authors confute the opinion of Lind (1753) and others that it was a decoction of spruce tips which effected the cure, by recalling that Cartier's notes particularly refer to the fact that the "Indians had to wait for the leaves to appear in the spring." The tree, on the opinion of Dr. J. Gilmour, director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, was *Sassafras officinale*. The discussion of scurvy in this chapter and in Chapter XIV is the most enlightening historically known to the reviewer. The authors have brought to light many older writings bearing on the subject, ordinarily quite overlooked. Noteworthy is the little book entitled "Observationes circa Scorbutum," by Johannes Bachstrom, published at Leyden in 1743, which demolished all the complicated distinctions which had grown