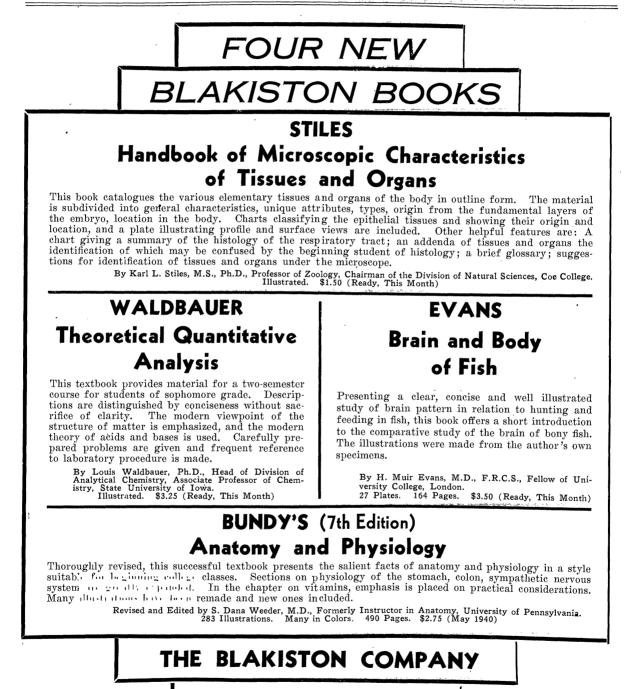
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FRIDAY, JUNE 14, 1940

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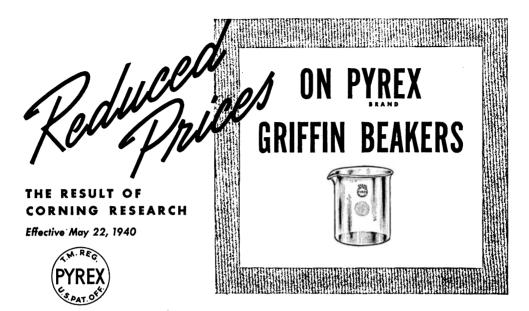
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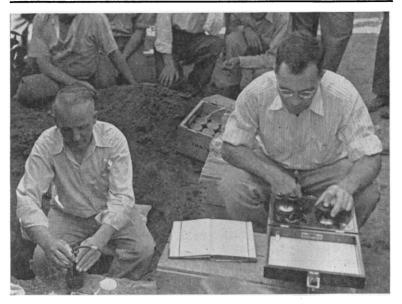
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Dr. Haas, left, and Mr. Compton, right, checking soil pH with Beckman Meter



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RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA.—The College of Agriculture, University of California, is conducting an impor-tant study to determine the effect of pH on the growth of fruit trees— particularly citrus, avocado, and walnut trees. Under the direction of Dr. A. R. C. Haas, who has been

1-5 soll-water ratio on oven or air dried samples generally showed higher pH values than those made under actual field-moisture condi-tions. Inasmuch as Beckman Glass Electrodes can be pushed directly into the soil at the roots of growing plants and trees, their use permits plants and trees, their use permits measurements to be made under substantially the exact conditions with which the trees must contend for their nutrition.

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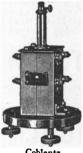
of Dr. A. R. C. Haas, who has been working on this problem for a num-ber of years, extensive soil pH de-terminations made both in the labo-ratory and field indicate that acid soil conditions give best growth for the trees mentioned, although they will tolerate wide variations. A Beckman Laboratory pH Meter with a temperature-correction ad-justor to within 1° C, was used in this work, and it was found that measurements made by the usual 1-5 soil-water ratio on oven or alr

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Special Articles: Biotin—an Essential Growth Factor for Certain					

MINUTE AMOUNTS OF CHEMICAL ELEMENTS IN **RELATION TO PLANT GROWTH**¹

By Professor D. R. HOAGLAND

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

A GENERAL survey of the history of plant and animal nutrition during the past two decades records notable advances in scientific knowledge, many of which have been made possible only because of the recognition and experimental control of organic and inorganic substances in micro-quantities. The investigator of the nutrition of higher plants, which can grow in solutions of purely mineral character, has certain advantages of technique not enjoyed by the investigator of animal nutrition, in the study of the relation to the growth of the organism of very minute amounts of chemical elements. Yet the plant physiologist has not always profited by these advantages. For a long period the standard teaching was that only ten chemical elements (nitrogen, phosphorus, sulphur, calcium, magnesium, potassium, iron, carbon, hydrogen and oxygen) were generally indispensable for the growth of higher plants. Many other elements, if found to be effective at all, were regarded merely as plant stimulants or poisons. Following earlier work in France, Mazé² presented in 1914 certain evidence, based on controlled water-culture experiments, of the requirement for normal growth of the maize plant of chemical elements not included in the list of ten, but his experiments

² P. Mazé, Ann. Inst. Pasteur., 28: 21-68, 1914.

¹ Presented before the National Academy of Sciences, April, 1940, as a highly condensed review, for the information of those who have not had occasion to refer to the literature of this field.

tions in the smears, greatly facilitating their interpretation. Attempts to simplify the technic as well as to avoid the necessity for relying on imported stains such as Ponceau de Xylidene and Light Green have since been carried out. These have been greatly facilitated by the report of Lillie³ that domestic Biebrich Scarlet and Fast Green FCF may be substituted for Ponceau de Xylidene and Light Green respectively; and that a mixture of equal parts of 5 per cent. phosphomolybdic and phosphotungstic acids gives adequate mordanting in one minute. On this basis, it has been possible to simplify and shorten the technic previously described for the vaginal smear and use domestic stains exclusively.

The revised staining technic embracing these modifications is as follows:

(1) From fixing solution, earry through alcohols to water; stain with Harris Hematoxylon for 2 minutes, and wash in running water for 5 minutes.

(2) Instead of the Ponceau de Xylidene-Acid Fuchsin-Orange G solution, 1 per cent. Biebrich Scarlet, water soluble (Nat'l Aniline and Chem. Co.) and 0.4 per cent. Orange G in 1 per cent. acetic acid. Stain 1 minute and rinse in water.

(3) In place of the 3 per cent. phosphotungstic acid mordant, a mixture of equal parts of 5 per cent. phosphomolybdic and phosphotungstic acids. Mordant 1 minute and rinse.

(4) In place of 0.3 per cent. Light Green, a 0.25 per cent. solution of Fast Green FCF (Nat'l Aniline and Chem. Co.) in 0.3 per cent. acetic acid. Stain 2 minutes. Do not rinse.

(5) Differentiate in 1 per cent. acetic acid for 1 minute, carry through alcohols to xylol and mount in damar.

It is possible to omit the hematoxylin stain under certain conditions, as in the routine treatment of the menopause with estrogens. With this omission, the smear can be stained in 5 minutes.

The assistance of Eugene J. Cohen in working out these modifications is gratefully acknowledged.

EPHRAIM SHORR

THE NEW YORK HOSPITAL AND THE DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE, CORNELL UNIVERSITY MEDICAL COLLEGE, NEW YORK, N. Y.

SOLUTIONS OF CHLOROPHYLL IN SALT WATER

ALTHOUGH a number of workers have studied aqueous extracts of chlorophyll from fresh leaves, only Inman¹ seems to have discovered that the addition of salt to the water is beneficial. Since Inman seems never to have published his findings in this respect, and since the author hasn't time to do adequate re-

³ Stain Technology, 15: 17, 1940.

search with the method, it seems worth publishing this statement.

As various workers have stated, chlorophyll can be suspended in water if fresh leaves are ground in water, either with or without an abrasive. However, the suspended chlorophyll settles out within a few hours (with a few exceptions). Smith² has found that the addition to the colloid solution of a detergent will keep the chlorophyll in suspension. Less drastic treatment than that will stabilize the colloid. It is only necessary to grind the leaves with a salt and water solution rather than pure water.

 Na_2SO_4 and NaCl have been found effective. The optimum concentration for NaCl is between 2 per cent. and 5 per cent. Since it has seemed desirable to control the pH, M/15 phosphate buffer of pH 7 is being used at present, and it gives very satisfactory solutions. CaCl₂ will not maintain the colloid in suspension. Buffers of pH 6 and below are not satisfactory, for the chlorophyll tends to decompose. Borate buffers at pH's 8 and 11 seem satisfactory, but it is feared that the high pH may change the chlorophyll in some way.

The chlorophyll suspension obtained in salt solutions is never clear. It possesses the various properties reported heretofore. It is relatively photostable, is precipitated by protein coagulants, passes through filter paper, is difficult to centrifuge down, has the red absorption band in the same place as that of an intact leaf, behaves as if negatively charged in cataphoresis, can be precipitated by ammonium sulfate and redissolved by addition of fresh buffer solution.

JOHN SHAFER, JR.

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² E. L. Smith, SCIENCE, 91: 199-200, 1940.

BOOKS RECEIVED

- BRUMBAUGH, A. J., Editor. Boucher's Chicago College Plan. Revised edition. Pp. x+413. University of Chicago Press. \$3.00.
- CAMPBELL, DOUGLAS H. The Evolution of the Land Plants (Embryophyta). Pp. ix + 731. 351 figures. Stanford University Press. \$6.50.
- GOLDSCHMIDT, RICHARD. The Material Basis of Evolution. Pp. xi+436. 83 figures. Yale University Press. \$5.00.
- Highway Research Board. Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Meeting, 1939. Pp. 573. Illustrated. National Research Council, Washington.
- HILGARD, ERNEST R. and DONALD G. MARQUIS. Conditioning and Learning. Pp. xi + 429. Appleton-Century. \$2.75.
 SAND, H. J. S. Electrochemistry and Electrochemical
- SAND, H. J. S. Electrochemistry and Electrochemical Analysis: Vol. II, Gravimetric Electrolytic Analysis and Electrolytic Marsh Tests. Pp. ix + 149. Illustrated. Blackie and Son, Glasgow. 5/-.
- Smithsonian Institution. Miscellaneous Collections: Vol. 100, Essays in Historical Anthropology of North America. Pp. 600. 34 figures. 16 plates. The Institution.
- Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Collected Reprints, 1939. The Institution.

¹O. L. Inman and M. L. Crowell, *Plant Physiol.*, 14: 388-390, 1939; also in private conversation.

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