

TABLE I

MEASUREMENTS IN CENTIMETERS AND LENGTH/WIDTH RATIOS  
OF OYSTERS FROM MATAGORDA BAY, TEXAS,  
COMPARED WITH DATA OF LUNZ<sup>1</sup>

Type of oyster	Number	Average length	Average width	L/W ratio
Small round .....	200	3.57	3.08	1.16
Market size round.....	112	9.48	7.58	1.25
Small coons .....	139	7.63	3.81	2.00
Market coons .....	153	11.74	5.07	2.32
<i>South Carolina Oysters</i>				
Selected shells, Indian shell heaps ....	10	16.61	6.50	2.56
Selected oysters, S. C. commercial beds..	140	9.93	4.90	2.03
Ordinary shells, Indian shell heaps ....	50	10.90	6.38	1.71
Ordinary oysters, S. C. commercial beds..	150	6.78	4.47	1.52

commercial beds. Oysters in the latter category averaged only 2.67 inches in length. The quality must have been poor, for minimum legal market size in most Southern states is 3 or 3½ inches.

Both sets of data show that the length/width ratio increases with size for both round and long oysters, but the increase is greater for the elongate type.

Coon oysters often grow in shallow water and are taken by hand so much that wading for oysters is known in some localities as cooning. This oyster was more easily obtained by the American Indian than the round oyster from deeper water. It seems plausible that small populations of Indians had the choice of larger oysters than those coming from intensively fished wild reefs of certain localities to-day. However, well-cultivated beds and some wild beds produce oysters comparable in size, although shorter in length, to any the Indian was able to obtain.

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### THE FERMENTATION TEST FOR VITAMIN B<sub>1</sub>

IN October of 1937 there appeared in SCIENCE a short note by R. J. Williams<sup>1</sup> on the use of yeast or other fungi for vitamin B<sub>1</sub> tests. In it Dr. Williams coupled our fermentation test<sup>2, 3, 4</sup> with Schopfer's growth test. Reference to the original note on our

fermentation test<sup>2</sup> will show that the test is in no way related to growth and, in fact, test conditions tend to exclude growth of the yeast.

No attempt was made, at the time, to correct the impression created by Williams's note because it was thought that the reader would readily detect the error. However, in a recent book on vitamin B<sub>1</sub> by R. R. Williams and Spies<sup>5</sup> these authors have repeated the remarks referred to above.

It is to be hoped that by calling attention to the above inaccuracies in the literature, a more correct appraisal of the fermentation test will be made possible. This useful and rapid method for the determination of vitamin B<sub>1</sub> has been successfully employed in our laboratories for several years.

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### APPEAL FOR AID FROM CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

IN a letter of October 31 from Professor K. Absolon, curator of the Moravian Museum, Brno, Czecho-Slovakia, the writer appeals for aid with subscribers to the monthly *Příroda* (Nature), which as a result of the recent crisis has lost many local subscriptions and is thereby endangered in its existence. Professor Absolon asks that this matter be brought to the attention of the American libraries and establishments, as well as workers in natural history. The periodical in question has now reached thirty-one volumes. Its contents resemble those of *Popular Science Monthly*, with many original scientific reports and observations. All the original contributions, especially for the future, are and will continue to be provided with translations of their titles and text of illustrations, as well as with an adequate summary in English, French, German or Italian. The yearly subscription price of the periodical for America is \$3.00.

A. HRDLÍČKA

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## SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

### ANIMAL PARASITOLOGY

*Traité de zoologie et de parasitologie médicale et vétérinaire.* By M. NEVEU-LEMAIRE, professeur agrégé des facultés de médecine, Paris. Published by Vigot Frères, éditeurs.

<sup>1</sup> R. J. Williams, SCIENCE, 86: 349, 1937.

<sup>2</sup> A. S. Schultz, L. Atkin and C. N. Frey, *Jour. Amer. Chem. Soc.*, 59: 948, 1937.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 59: 2457, 1937.

It is just fifty years since the appearance of the great treatises of Blanchard on human parasites and of Neumann and Railliet on those of domestic animals which gave to scientific students reference works of comprehensive character for the rapidly expanding

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 60: 1514, 1938.

<sup>5</sup> R. R. Williams and T. D. Spies, "Vitamin B<sub>1</sub> and Its Use in Medicine," Macmillan, 1938.