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THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

POSTPONEMENT OF THE NEW YORK MEETING

By Dr. F. R. MOULTON

PERMANENT SECRETARY

IN compliance with a direct request of the Office of Defense Transportation, an agency of the Federal Government, the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and of 44 of its affiliated and associated societies that was scheduled to be held in New York City beginning next December 28 has been postponed, by vote of the Executive Committee. The reason for the request from ODT is the excessive demands on railroads due to the war efforts of the country in general, and to the greatly added burdens due to recent military developments in particular.

Naturally the postponement of a meeting implies that it will be held at a later date. In the present case, however, no definite plans for the future have

been made or can be made until the acute transportation problems now existing have been at least partially solved. It is not possible to predict how soon the transportation conditions will improve; as soon as they are improved the ODT will not discourage the holding of scientific meetings.

Instead of drifting, and possibly grumbling, until the future of scientific meetings is clarified, scientists may well consider in all seriousness how their meetings might be improved. Presumably they can be improved in many ways, and if some of the ways of improving them can be discovered during this interval of uncertainty, the disappointments and irritations due to the postponement of the New York meeting will be forgotten.

in finding a simple method of concentration, using 96 per cent. ethyl alcohol as the dialyzing liquid or "outside solution."

According to this method, 40 ml of the taka-diastase solution free from $\text{Na}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_4$ is concentrated by dialyzing through a Cellophane bag for about six hours against 96 per cent. alcohol as "outside solution," the alcohol being changed two or three times.

During the concentration, part of the enzyme was precipitated and deposited on the Cellophane. After concentration the small residual solution (about 3 to 5 ml) was precipitated by the same volume of absolute alcohol, centrifugated and, together with the Cellophane bag (containing very active substance) dried in the desiccator over H_2SO_4 . The yield was about 50 mg, *i.e.*, 2.5 per cent. of the original substance.

Using the same method, we concentrated solutions of the commercial taka-diastase without any treatment by reductants (which required only half the time of the concentration of the taka treated by $\text{Na}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_4$). The yield was about 3 per cent. of the commercial product. Owing to the small quantity of the taka-diastase it sometimes happened that all the substance was precipitated and deposited on the Cellophane. In this case, the substance after drying was either carefully separated from the Cellophane, or pieces of the Cellophane containing the enzyme were placed in water and filtered off after the substance had dissolved. The substance precipitated on the Cellophane was even more active than the substance precipitated from the concentrated solution by absolute alcohol.

The dried product was tested for activity on maltose and sucrose. It was found that the product retained the full maltose activity splitting power of the original preparation but was practically inactive on sucrose.

This confirms the theory that taka-maltase and taka-sucrase are two distinct enzymes.

JACOB FEIGENBAUM

CANCER RESEARCH LABORATORIES,
THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY,
JERUSALEM, PALESTINE

A PLATINUM SCOOP FOR TRANSFERRING STERILE POWDERS

THE transfer of small quantities of sterile powder or chemicals to another container or a medium usually is accomplished with a loop or with a pipette having a wide bore. By such a procedure some powder usually is spilled or scattered on the table, which is obviously undesirable. To overcome this inconvenience, the writer has devised a platinum scoop (shovel) which will accomplish conveniently the transfer of powder from a container or test-tube to another container or a culture medium.

The scoop is made by folding a piece of platinum

sheet into a U-shaped shovel which is attached with a platinum wire, a copper wire or lead glass to an inoculating needle holder. Fig. 1 illustrates three sizes: (a) $24 \times 5 \times 2$ mm; (b) $25 \times 5 \times 3$ mm; (c) $20 \times 10 \times 3$ mm. Scoop (a) will hold about 0.17 grams of starch powder; (b), 0.23 grams; and (c), 0.45 grams.

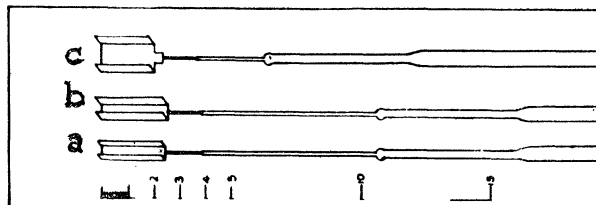


FIG. 1. Platinum scoops (a) $24 \times 5 \times 2$ mm; (b) $25 \times 5 \times 3$ mm; (c) $20 \times 10 \times 3$ mm.

This scoop has been successfully used by the writer in adding sterile rice starch and starch and charcoal to various media for culturing *Endamoeba histolytica* and *Trichomonas vaginalis*. These scoops can be used also in analytic chemical weighings, and have several advantages over glass or metal spatulas.

This simple apparatus has the advantages of being readily sterilized by flame and requiring only a few seconds for cooling. Because of this, the transfer of sterile powder and chemicals is conveniently and neatly accomplished for a large number of culture tubes or containers in a short period of time.

A. PACKCHANIAN

THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE,
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS,
GALVESTON

BOOKS RECEIVED

- AVERITT, PAUL. *The Early Grove Gas Field, Scott and Washington Counties, Virginia*. Illustrated. Pp. ix + 50. Bulletin 56, Virginia Geological Survey, University, Va.
- BUTTS, CHARLES. *Geology of the Appalachian Valley in Virginia, Bulletin 52; Part I, Geologic Text and Illustrations*. Pp. xxxii + 568; *Part II, Fossil Plates and Explanations*. Pp. iv + 271. Virginia Geological Survey, University, Virginia.
- KNEBELMAN, MORRIS S. and TRACY Y. THOMAS. *Principles of College Algebra*. Pp. x + 380. Prentice-Hall, Inc. \$2.50.
- MORTON, R. A. *The Application of Absorption Spectra to the Study of Vitamins, Hormones and Coenzymes*. Second edition. Illustrated. Jarrell-Ash Company, Boston; Adam Hilger, Ltd., London. \$6.50.
- MÜLLER, RALPH H., R. L. GARMAN and M. E. DROZ. *Experimental Electronics*. Pp. xv + 330. Prentice-Hall, Inc. \$4.65.
- SEASHORE, CARL E. *Pioneering in Psychology*. Illustrated. Pp. vi + 232. University of Iowa Press.
- Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the Municipal Court of Philadelphia, 1941*. Pp. xlix + 413. The Statistical Department, Philadelphia.
- Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society; Vol. 86, No. 1; The Early History of Science and Learning in America*. Illustrated. Pp. iv + 204. American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS CARNEGIE INSTITUTION OF WASHINGTON WASHINGTON, D. C.

Pub. No.

530. **Studies of Cenozoic Vertebrates of Western North America and of Fossil Primates.** (Contributions to Paleontology). Octavo, iii + 222 pp., 31 plates, 31 text figures. Paper, \$2.25; cloth, \$2.75.
- I. Arthur B. Drescher—Later Tertiary Equidae from the Tejon Hills, California.
 - II. E. L. Furlong—A New Pliocene Antelope from Mexico; with Remarks on Some Known Antilocaprids.
 - III. Ida S. DeMay—Quaternary Bird Life of the McKittrick Asphalt, California.
 - IV. Ida S. DeMay—Pleistocene Bird Life of the Carpinteria Asphalt, California.
 - V. Paul C. Henshaw—A Tertiary Mammalian Fauna from the San Antonio Mountains Near Tonopah, Nevada.
 - VI. Robert W. Wilson—Preliminary Study of the Fauna of Rampart Cave, Arizona.
 - VII. Hildegard Howard—A Review of the American Fossil Storks.
 - VIII. G. H. R. von Koenigswald—The South African Man-Apes and Pithecanthropus.
540. Williams, Howel. **The Geology of Crater Lake National Park, Oregon; with a Reconnaissance of the Cascade Range Southward to Mount Shasta.** Quarto, vi + 162 pp., 31 plates, 31 text figures. Paper, \$2.50; cloth, \$3.50.

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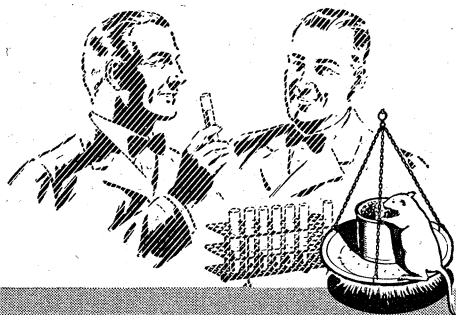


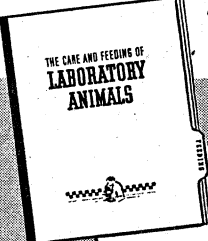
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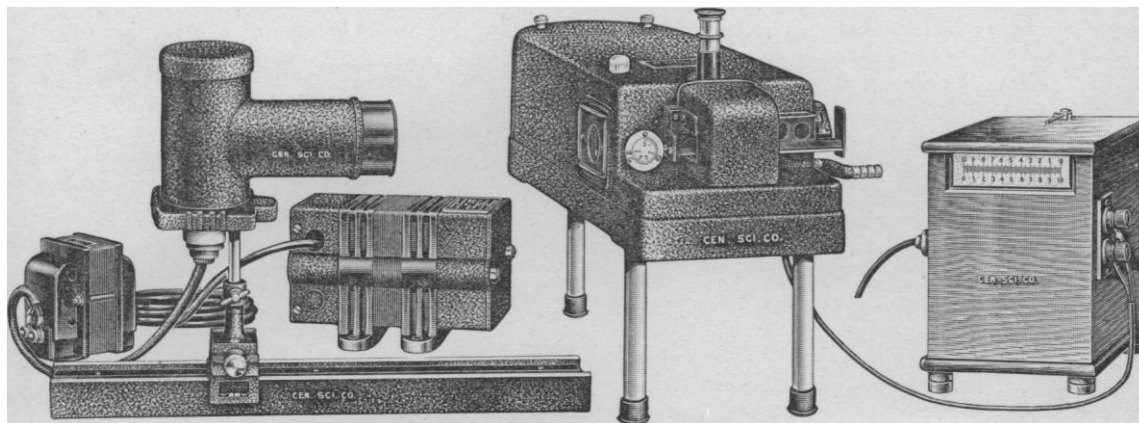
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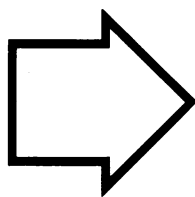
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