

tin) was used. It was found that the sedimentation could be observed for practically as long as desired, the limiting factor apparently being only a blurring by diffusion (a dilution due to the field gradient also was noticeable). The sedimentation of colloidal particles very much larger than the hemoglobin molecules also was observed until E was filled. The preliminary tests indicate, in accord with theory, that the resolving power of the ultracentrifuge can be much increased, at least in some cases. A new and stronger rotor with the cell further from the axis is under construction with which further tests will be made.

The writer is greatly indebted to Messrs. Fritz Linke and Philipp Sommer, instrument makers, who constructed the apparatus, and to the Rockefeller Foundation for a grant in support of the development of the ultracentrifuge.

J. W. BEAMS

ROSS PHYSICAL LABORATORY,
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

A SMALL HYGROMETER

THE construction of a hygrometer that was much smaller and more sensitive than the usual commercial equipment became a necessity during the course of an experiment in which the relative humidity of a long narrow sealed tube had to be determined without changing its humidity by opening it.

This instrument is shown in Fig. 1. It consists of

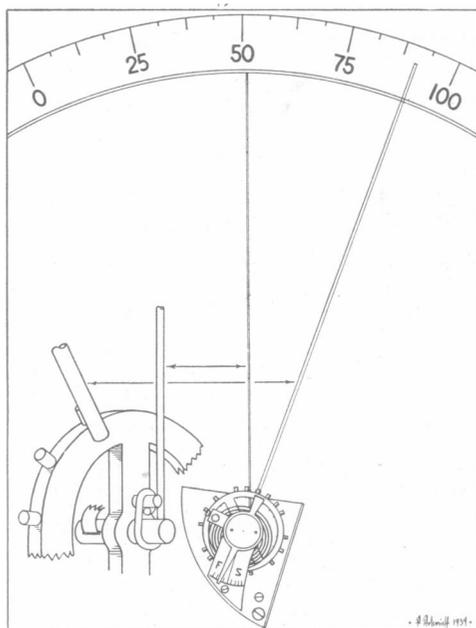


FIG. 1

the balance wheel, hair spring and small portions of the bearing plates of a small jeweled wrist watch attached to a glass plate. To the escape nub on the arm of the balance wheel is attached a very fine human

hair carefully washed in ether and alcohol. It then bends over the shaft of the balance wheel and is attached at the opposite end of the glass plate under slight tension produced by the hair spring. A very fine glass rod attached to the circumference of the balance wheel indicates the motion produced by the elongation or contraction of the hair with humidity changes. A more sensitive measurement may be obtained by attaching small mirrors to the rim of the balance wheel and the regulator arm and using the distance between the spots of light reflected as an indicator of the motion produced by humidity changes.

The instrument was calibrated and checked by alternately placing it in a closed chamber first over water and then over concentrated H_2SO_4 . All readings were within 2 per cent. R. H. When placed above salt solutions in closed containers, the instrument checked to about 1 per cent. in every instance. Under these conditions equilibrium was reached within 15 minutes.

The advantages of this instrument are threefold. (1) It is quite accurate and may be easily read without altering the humidity in the chamber. (2) As the small size makes its use in very small spaces possible without changing the humidity, humidity of microclimates may be obtained. (3) It is inexpensive and easy to construct.

D. E. HOWELL

RODERICK CRAIG

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

BOOKS RECEIVED

- Annales de L'Acfas*; Vol. 5, 1939. Pp. 283. Association Canadienne-Française Pour L'Avancement des Sciences, Montreal.
- BAILY, JR., JOSHUA L. *Physiological Group Differentiation in Lymnaea Columella*. American Journal of Hygiene Monographic Series, No. 14, April, 1939. Pp. x+133. 22 figures. 2 plates. Johns Hopkins Press. \$1.00.
- Collected Papers from the Faculty of Science, Osaka Imperial University; Series A, Mathematics, Vol. 5, 1937*. The University, Japan.
- CRANE, M. B. and W. J. C. LAWRENCE. *The Genetics of Garden Plants*. Second edition. Pp. xxi+287. 62 figures. Macmillan. \$3.25.
- NEWMAN, M. H. A. *Elements of the Topology of Plane Sets of Points*. Pp. viii+221. 93 figures. Cambridge University Press, Macmillan. \$3.50.
- PARKINS, A. E. and J. R. WHITAKER, Editors. *Our Natural Resources and their Conservation*. Second edition. Pp. xiv+647. Illustrated. Wiley. \$4.00.
- Scientific Journal of the Royal College of Science, Vol. IX, Containing Papers Read during the Session 1938-1939*. Pp. 137. Illustrated. Arnold, London. 7s 6d.
- Virginia Geological Survey, State Commission on Conservation and Development: Bulletin 49, Outline of the Geology and Mineral Resources of Russell County, Virginia*, HERBERT P. WOODWARD. Pp. ix+91. 9 figures, 13 plates. *Bulletin 50, Ground-water Resources of Northern Virginia*, R. C. CADY. Pp. xii+200. Illustrated. *Bulletin 53, Barite Deposits of Virginia*, RAYMOND S. EDMUNDSON. Pp. xiii+85. Illustrated. The Survey, University, Virginia.
- WORCESTER, PHILIP G. *A Textbook of Geomorphology*. Pp. vii+565. 375 figures. Van Nostrand. \$4.00.