

constant medical supervision until a definite diagnosis has been made. In most cases this period of investigation need not entail any absence from school providing that games and physical exercises are suitably restricted. I wish to thank Dr. V. T. Thierens, medical officer of Health, County Borough of Blackburn, for his permission to give the figures quoted in this letter.—I am, etc.,

J. F. WARIN,  
Birmingham, Feb. 22. Assistant Medical Officer of Health.

### Vaginal Cysts: Persistent Vesiculæ Seminales?

SIR.—I was recently consulted by a primipara, aged 29, at the beginning of her fourth month of pregnancy. She complained of a feeling of swelling and discomfort in the posterior part of the "forebody," which symptoms had been present since the beginning of her pregnancy and had been steadily increasing in severity. On examination I discovered what I took to be a cyst about the size of a hen's egg low down on the posterior vaginal wall. As this threatened to prove a serious complication at parturition I advised immediate operation. The patient was admitted to Newcastle General Hospital, where the cystic condition was dealt with radically by Mr. J. Collingwood-Stewart. His report is of particular interest: "At the operation two distinct cysts were found, one on either side of the mid-line between the posterior vaginal wall and the rectum, and they contained glairy fluid. These cysts were considered to be Gärtner duct cysts."

Cysts of Gärtner's duct are described as occupying an antero-lateral position in the vagina in close proximity to the urethra. Cysts of the posterior vaginal wall are described as single and due to trauma. According to embryological precept, the Wolffian ducts in the female usually fail for some obscure reason to complete their full course and come to an untimely end just lateral to the upper part of the uterus or of the cervix. When they do occasionally, so to speak, make the distance, they traverse the walls of the vagina laterally and are there known as the ducts of Gärtner; and these are the ducts which give rise to the Gärtner duct cysts. I have never seen any reference in the literature to the possible presence in the female of rudimentary vesiculæ seminales, which as offshoots of the ducts of Gärtner should be located low down between the vaginal and rectal walls; but it is surely as reasonable to expect to find homologues of the vesiculæ seminales in the female as it is to find nipples in the male and a penis (clitoris) in the female. I therefore suggest that the case I have quoted is one of "cysts of the seminal vesicles," and, as a corollary, that some of the cysts of the posterior vaginal wall usually described as traumatic may be found to be of that nature.—I am, etc.,

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Feb. 24. J. A. L. MAGEE.

### Vitamin D in Dietetics

SIR.—We thoroughly agree with the points of view put forward by your correspondent Dr. Chalmers Watson (February 18, p. 357). Unfortunately, the available methods for estimating the vitamin content of food are subject to very wide margins of error, and, further than this, all foods that are rich in vitamins vary quite widely in their vitamin content. This has led to extreme confusion both as to the richness of normal foods and as to the actual human requirements for the various vitamins. Within our own experience it takes five years or longer to arrive at a reasonably accurate quantitative figure for the richness in vitamin value of any food.

Butter and cod-liver oil may be cited as two examples, and the work, besides being tedious, is very expensive. The dictum that we should rely on the proved value of fresh foods until the quantitative situation has been clarified is certainly appropriate. Our efforts, so far as cod-liver oil is concerned, have always been concentrated on conserving the full fresh food value of this oil and making it available in an absolutely unspoiled condition both to the medical profession and to the user.

Your correspondent Dr. Eva McCall (February 11, p. 300) directed attention to the fact that the prejudice against cod-liver oil mentioned by Miss Lindsay and Professor Mottram (January 7, p. 14) was probably exaggerated. The truth of the matter is that cod-liver oil is much more perishable in its quality as a food oil than in its vitamin value, which can remain intact long after the oil has, by mishandling, become unthinkable as a food or even as a medicine. Another factor in operation with her has probably been the lower intake of oil itself, since the *British Pharmacopoeia* malt and oil has only 10 per cent. by weight of oil present in it. It is nowadays unnecessary to swallow damaged, repellent oil or excessive quantities of oil to get all the vitamins A and D necessary.—I am, etc.,

K. MACLENNAN,  
Hull, Feb. 24. General Manager, British Cod Liver  
Oil Producers (Hull) Ltd.

## Universities and Colleges

### UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

On February 25 the honorary degree of D.Sc. was conferred on Dr. del Rio Hortega, formerly director of the National Institute of Cancer, Madrid.

P. E. H. Adams, B.M. (Exeter College), has been re-elected to the Margaret Ogilvie's Readership in Ophthalmology until September 30, 1941.

At a Congregation held on February 25 the following medical degrees were conferred:

B.M.—B. A. M. Brown, R. W. Parnell, J. M. Almond.

### UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

At a Congregation held on February 25 the following medical degrees were conferred:

M.D.—A. Willcox.

M.B., B.CHIR.—\*M. J. Ingram, \*C. G. Rob, \*P. C. Conran, \*G. Bourne, J. I. H. Laurie, A. Leese, E. W. O. Adkins, J. Arnott, K. G. Bergin.

\* By proxy.

### UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

At a meeting of the Senate, held on February 22, H. P. Himsworth, M.D., F.R.C.P., was appointed, as from April 1, to the University Chair of Medicine, tenable at University College Hospital Medical School.

Mr. Lionel V. Cargill, F.R.C.S., was appointed a Fellow of King's College.

The title of Professor of Physics in the University was conferred on Mr. Gilbert Stead, M.A., in respect of the post held by him at Guy's Hospital Medical School.

### ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND

#### Museum Demonstrations

A course of museum demonstrations in the theatre of the College began on February 27, when Mr. R. St. Leger Brockman demonstrated some inflammatory lesions of the alimentary canal. To-day (Friday, March 3) Dr. A. J. E. Cave will speak on the anatomy of the salivary glands; on March 10 he will discuss the anatomy of the pharynx and oesophagus; and on March 17 the anatomy of the stomach. On March 6 and 13 Mr. L. W. Proger will show new specimens. All the demonstrations commence at 5 p.m., and are open to advanced students and medical practitioners.