of the pure crystalline material in olive oil, of such strength that 1 mgm. contains 0·025 γ.

The Conference recommends that pure β-carotene be adopted as the standard for vitamin A, in place of the present standard, which is a mixture of the isomers of carotene. The value of the unit is unchanged and one such unit is contained in 0·6 γ of the new standard: the old standard contained the same activity in 1·0 γ. The standard preparation is to be issued in solution in a vegetable oil, in which it has been shown that it does not lose colour on incubation in the presence of air at 37° C. for 7 days, the strength of the solution being such that 1 gm. contains 500 units, or 300 γ of β-carotene. The Conference report states that it has been found that measurement of the coefficient of absorption at 3280 A. affords a reliable method for measuring the vitamin A content of liver oils and concentrates, and that the value obtained for $E_{1\text{ cm.}}^{1\text{ per cent}}$ 3280 A. can be converted into a figure representing units per gram by multiplying by the factor 1,600. This figure is the average of a series of comparative and independent tests on the unsaponifiable fractions of liver oils and on concentrates of high potency.

For vitamin C the Conference recommends the adoption of *l*-ascorbic acid as standard, the unit being the activity of 0·05 mgm. of the pure substance. (The previous standard was lemon juice, one unit being contained in 0·1 c.c.: it has since been found that the potency of lemon juice varies, but the adoption of the new standard does not involve any significant change in the value of the unit.) It was decided to ask the Institute of Medical Chemistry, Szeged, through Prof. A. Szent-Györgyi, to prepare a batch of 500 gm. of the standard and to ask Prof. W. N. Haworth to co-operate in controlling its purity.

Among the subjects suggested for future work are the provision of a sample of cod liver oil as a subsidiary standard of reference for vitamins A and D and the investigation of the anomalous action on certain species of different sources of vitamin D.

All the standards are kept at the National Institute for Medical Research, London, acting for this purpose as the central laboratory on behalf of the Health Organisation of the League of Nations.

University and Educational Intelligence

CAMBRIDGE.—The General Board recommends that the following additional University teaching offices be established: (*a*) an assistant directorship of research in the Faculty of Economics and Politics; (*b*) an assistant directorship of research in colloid science; (*c*) a University lectureship in the Department of Mineralogy and Petrology; (*d*) a University demonstratorship in agricultural engineering (subject to financial provision being made by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries); (*e*) two University lectureships in the Department of Pathology; (*f*) a University lectureship in experimental psychology; (*g*) a readership in industrial psychology (subject to the provision by the Medical Research Council of the stipend and pension contribution); (*h*) an assistant directorship of research in industrial psychology (subject to the provision by the Medical Research Council of the stipend and pension contribution).

EDINBURGH: On the recommendation of the Senatus, the Court has approved of the establishment of a Sharpey-Schafer lectureship in physiology, a fund for the endowment of this lectureship having been contributed by pupils and friends of Sir Edward Sharpey-Schafer. The first of the lectures, to be given biennially, will be delivered in the coming summer term.

LONDON.—The Buckinghamshire County Council has decided to make a grant of £5,000, payable over ten years, towards the erection of new buildings in Bloomsbury.

A grant of £2,000 has been made by the Pilgrim Trustees to the London School of Economics towards central expenditure on the Land Utilisation Survey. The grant, which is for staff salaries and the preparation of the report on the Survey, is estimated to cover the cost of completing the Survey as far as central expenditure is concerned. Local bodies and others are subscribing to local expenditure, and it is hoped that sufficient additional contributions from these sources will be obtained to complete the total cost of the work. The Pilgrim Trustees have further given valuable assistance to the Survey by setting aside a sum of £1,000 which can be drawn upon as required by the London School of Economics to secure the continuance of the publication of the maps. This sum is to be repaid by the School from the publication account of the Survey.

Science News a Century Ago

Walker's Eidouranion

"The Strand Theatre," said *The Times* of March 31, 1835, "from which Thalia and Melpomene have been banished by the Lord Chamberlain, has during Lent become the residence of Urania. Mr. Walker, the well-known popular lecturer, and perhaps the original lecturer, on the motion of the heavenly bodies and the phenomena of the planets, has commenced his very interesting lectures at this house. His lectures, and the reputation he has deservedly acquired by them, his apparatus and machinery, are so well known to almost all persons, that there is no need of giving a further description of them. They are in their contrivance elaborate and complex, but the illustration which they afford of the subject which he discusses is at once simple and intelligible. . . . The lecturer himself enters into his subject with a spirit of inquiry, and an earnestness of endeavour to familiarize science, which are very refreshing to those whose attempts at gaining information have been chilled by the technical formality of more stately teachers. . . . At a time when the theatres are closed against dramatic performances the public cannot do better than devote a few hours to the acquirement of the scientific knowledge which these lectures, and similar lectures, convey and there can be little doubt that to the younger branches of the community they will convey that information to which young persons are exceedingly averse, unless it is conveyed in such a manner as to excite attention without distracting the understanding and wearying the patience." The lecturer was presumably Deane Franklin Walker (1778–1865) who, like his father Adam Walker (1731 ?–1821), lectured on science at Eton and Harrow and other public schools.

The Tides of the United Kingdom

On April 2, 1835, Whewell read a paper to the Royal Society entitled "On the Results of Tide