

# Tomb of Alexander May Now be Sought

*Archaeology*

## Royal Society of Alexandria Discusses Plans

A SEARCH for the tomb of Alexander the Great is likely to be conducted at last in his namesake city. Howard Carter, explaining his plans for the coming season's final work at the tomb of Tutankhamen, expressed interest in seeking the tomb of Alexander after his excava-

tions at the Valley of the Kings are ended. Residents of Egypt have countered with the suggestion that Egypt might well undertake this important search, and at present the need for locating Alexander's tomb is a much discussed topic.

The Macedonian conqueror who

fought the greater part of his world and won it, died in Babylon. Plutarch stated that Alexander was taken to Alexandria and buried in a gold coffin. Another historian, mentions seeing a glass sarcophagus of Alexander as it was carried in a procession leading westward from the Euphrates River.

If the tomb is in Alexandria at all, it is most likely to be at the site of the Mosque of Nebi Daniel. Plans for excavating in this neighborhood were discussed at the annual meeting of the Royal Society of Alexandria, held this month. Prof. Breccia, curator of the Greco-Roman Museum at Alexandria, urged that the city undertake the excavations to unearth the tomb of its founder.

The neighborhood of the mosque is considered worthy of careful exploration, for it was the part of the ancient city where other rulers probably were buried. A granite pillar, still erect, was partly unearthed not long ago by workmen engaged in street repairs in this neighborhood, and this bit of evidence of ancient construction has further stimulated interest in scientific study of the place.

Doubt that Alexander was ever buried in Egypt has been expressed by a correspondent in the Egyptian Gazette, who cites reasons why the Greek hero would more likely have been taken back to his native town of Pella for burial. He points out that Perdicas was the most influential of Alexander's generals, and that this Perdicas would not have taken the conqueror's body to Egypt, because Perdicas' arch-rival was Ptolemy of Egypt. The cortege moving westward, might well have been heading towards a port to embark for the Macedonian town of Pella, he contends.

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The Pueblo Grande de Nevada, known as the Lost City of the Moapa Valley, is to be investigated by government officials and archaeologists.

A life insurance statistician says that we eat 30 per cent. more food than our grandfathers and 374 per cent. more sugar.

### Parathyroid Glands—Continued

tissues is upset so that there is increased alkalinity of blood and tissues.

Sometimes children develop tetany spontaneously without removal of the parathyroids or any known injury. This condition is known as idiopathic tetany. The symptoms are similar to tetany in adults following removal of the glands. This form of tetany is often associated with rickets, which also makes it seem likely that the parathyroids in some way control the calcium supply of the body. In rickets it is generally held that there is a deficiency of calcium in the bones. Children with rickets get bow-legs and other bony deformities because not enough calcium goes into the bones and consequently they are soft and become bent out of shape when pressure, such as the weight of the body, is put on them. It may be that the children who get rickets are not getting enough calcium, or lime, into their bodies. It is also thought that even if they get enough calcium in food and water, they may not assimilate it properly if they do not get enough vitamin D, either in food or from the sun's rays. But some investigators now think that the assimilation of calcium, that is, its transference from food or water taken into the stomach to lime salts in blood and bones and muscles, is regulated entirely by the tiny, parathyroid glands. In that case the role played by vitamin D may be quite different.

"The study of cases of hyperparathyroidism may provide a clue to the nature of rickets," suggested Dr. Wilder in discussing the case of the young woman who suffered from tumor of the parathyroids. The symptoms of osteitis fibrosa, the name for the condition of the bones which the young woman had, probably as a result of over-functioning of her parathyroid glands, are not

unlike those of rickets. In the common form of rickets there is too much calcium in the blood serum and too little phosphorus, as is the case in osteitis fibrosa. Tumors and enlargement of the parathyroid glands have been found in cases of rickets.

Other investigators showed that the parathyroid glands of chicks became enlarged when the chicks were kept away from the sun's rays and were fed a ration poor in the antirachitic vitamin D. These observations have been confirmed.

The early history of the patient of Dr. Wilder's who suffered from a tumor of her parathyroids shows that she had had a capricious appetite ever since childhood. Consequently she had over-indulged in sweets and neglected vegetables, milk and cream. Probably she did not get an adequate amount of vitamin D, and while she escaped rickets in childhood she developed a condition similar to rickets later in life. When she was treated with ultraviolet light and a diet rich in vitamin D, marked gain in weight and strength and general improvement resulted. This, together with the results of the experiments with the chicks, suggested to Dr. Wilder that some antagonism exists between vitamin D and the parathyroids.

"It seems not unlikely that rickets, and osteitis fibrosa, may be due to over-function of the parathyroid glands and that the healing effect of vitamin D in these conditions may be due to inhibition of the parathyroid glands by this vitamin," Dr. Wilder concluded. Such a theory puts a new construction on previous ideas about the function of vitamin D. Further scientific investigations will doubtless provide the solution to the riddle of how rickets, tetany, calcium metabolism, vitamin D, and the parathyroid glands are related.

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