

### Tropical Diseases Research in Puerto Rico

THE eighth annual report of the Director of the School of Tropical Medicine of the University of Puerto Rico (under the auspices of Columbia University), recently received, summarises the work of the School during the year ending June 1934. Seminars, lectures and clinics are held weekly in the School, and the Pan-American Medical Association visited the School in March. Much research work has been done, of which an outline is given. This includes a study of tuberculosis and its occurrence in the Island, and a skin test for *Brucella* infection has been developed. In the Department of Chemistry, work on vitamin A testing of Puerto Rican food plants has been completed. In parasitology, special methods for detecting ova of *Schistosoma mansoni* have been devised, and some cases of human infection with the liver-fluke, *Fasciola hepatica*, have been detected. In mycology, infection with new species of ringworm organisms has been found, and the disease known as granuloma inguinale has been investigated. A list of the papers that have been published from the School is appended, together with details of administration and finance.

### Twenty-Five Years of Philosophy

IN recognition of the Royal Silver Jubilee, movements in British philosophy during the past twenty-five years have recently been reviewed in the *Philosopher* (13, No. 3, July 1935). In 1910, Bertrand Russell and A. N. Whitehead crystallised the logistic tradition and created the analytic method. The neo-realist creed has been developed by Russell, and the great principle of emergence has taken an important place in modern philosophy, chiefly through the work of C. Lloyd Morgan. These and other systems are, however, opposed by the concept of idealism, the greatest British supporter of which is F. H. Bradley. This reaction against materialism has received much support from British thinkers. Bradley supports absolute idealism, which is closely related to the philosophy of the Hegelians such as Sir James Baillie, Viscount Haldane, etc. Idealism has also found great favour among leading men of science like Sir Arthur Eddington and Sir James Jeans. The antagonism between spiritualism and materialism is exemplified in the controversies concerning animate Nature—vitalism and mechanism. L. T. Hogben supports the latter, but opposed to his views are those of Sir J. Arthur Thomson and J. S. Haldane, who claim the independence of biology from physics. The past twenty-five years has witnessed a welcome approach of philosophy, religion and the positive sciences.

### Early Books on the Hyacinth

UNDER the title "The Voorhelms of Haarlem", Mr. W. Roberts gives an interesting account of some of the Dutch bulb growers, and their literary efforts, during the eighteenth century (*J. Roy. Hort. Soc.*, 60, Part 3, pp. 199–208, May 1935). The Dutch trade in bulbs was established in the seventeenth century, upon a basis of secrecy. The "Dutch Gardener or the

Complete Florist", a book by Henry Van Oosten, published in London in 1703, devoted four pages to the hyacinth and forty to the tulip, but gave away none of the precious information. The publication of "A Treatise on the Hyacinth" by George Voorhelm, in 1752, broke the tradition, and, far from ruining the Dutch trade in bulbs, laid the foundation for development to its present magnificent proportions. The volume was translated into English, French, Italian and German, though no Dutch edition was apparently needed. It was the first scientific treatise on bulb culture, but Mr. Roberts cites many more later volumes on the same subject, and also outlines, in pleasing style, the later development and fortunes of the house of Voorhelm.

### Estimation of Small Percentages of Bismuth

IN view of the need for a generally agreed and reliable method of analysis for the small percentages of bismuth in copper, the Fiscal Policy Joint Committee, Brass, Copper and Nickel Silver Industries in 1933 enunciated, through a specially appointed Technical Sub-Committee, a number of analytical principles to be observed in the estimation. This has now been followed by a detailed method for the determination of quantities of bismuth of the order of 0.0002–0.005 per cent, based upon published literature on the subject, and the Secretary of the Committee, the address of which is Kings Court, 115 Colmore Row, Birmingham, invites comments from any who are interested.

### Mining in South Australia

THE "Mining Review" of the Department of Mines of South Australia for the half-year ending June 30, 1934, shows that there has been considerable activity in gold mining, due, of course, to the increase in the value of the product. Thus the quantity of gold obtained in 1933 was slightly more than double that obtained in 1932, but its value was considerably more than double that obtained in the previous year, being in fact approximately in the proportion of 7 to 3. There is also included in the pamphlet a description of a motor-driven rotary drill which has been devised, owing to the difficulty of obtaining fuel and boiler water for the ordinary steam-driven rotary drill.

### International Congress of Americanists

OWING to local difficulties, the twenty-sixth session of the International Congress of Americanists, which should have taken place in 1934, at Seville, was postponed; and at one time it was thought that no meeting would be possible before 1936. Arrangements, however, have been made for the Congress to open at Seville on October 12 next. A programme is being arranged by the Organising Committee, of which S. Gregorio Marañón, president of the Geographical Society, is chairman. The topics selected for discussion include the relations of the individual and the State in the early Spanish expeditions of discovery, conquest and colonisation; types of cities in Spanish America in the colonial period, and the functions of the Hispano-American municipality; social and juridical conditions of the Indians in the