Peoples of the Philippines

THE war in the Philippines has not been forgotten, nor has the courageous part played by the Filipinos alongside their American allies. But the average individual knows little about the geography of the Philippines, and less about the folk who inhabit them. To remedy this state of affairs, the Smithsonian Institution has produced War Background Studies No. 4, "Peoples of the Philippines", by Herbert W. Krieger; it contains 86 pages of interesting print, a number of well-chosen illustrations, and an extensive bibliography. An account of the topography, climate, and kindred subjects is given, but most of the work is devoted to a description of the people. As might be expected, they are for the most part very mixed in origin and are the result of more than one culture contact in the past. This is clearly apparent in the realm of religion, where it appears that many pagan Indonesian ideas and superstitions still persist, although the large majority of the inhabitants are Christians. The material culture of some of the more primitive tribes includes knives of various kinds, bows and arrows, and the blow gun. The darts in use with the latter are often poisoned, there resulting an exceedingly effective weapon for killing small game silently. Various types of houses are illustrated, and a description of the language given. But anyone wanting to know more about these islands and their interesting inhabitants, who surely will have a not unimportant part to play in the post-war world in the Pacific, should read for himself about the islands and their inhabitants.

New Farm Crops for Australia

AUSTRALIA possesses three main stations for testing the agricultural and horticultural suitability of various kinds of plants from other regions for Australian conditions. Pamphlet No. 114 of the Commonwealth of Australia Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (314 Albert Street, East Melbourne, Victoria), by A. McTaggart and T. B. Paltridge, gives details of some of the useful and outstanding species tested at the Lawes (Queensland) station, which has a sub-tropical climate. Among the outstanding introductions is *Stylosanthes guianensis*, which appears to be capable of assuming the agricultural role of lucerne (*Medicago sativa*) under tropical conditions. The variety *polia* of *M. sativa* is also suitable. Two kinds of cocksfoot grass, *Dactylis glomerata* var. *hispanica*, from southern France, and a strain from Algeria, also appear among the outstanding introductions. Details of the yield of *Paspalum scrobiculatum*, *Urochloa pullulans*, *Panicum maximum* and Rhodes grass are given, and indicate higher potential yields than are obtained from present grassland. *Phaseolus lathyroides*, a shrubby legume from tropical regions, has been found to behave as a slender twining plant when associated with grasses, and indicates the necessity for imagination and insight when testing the suitability of new plants.

Research on Cancer

AMONG the numerous laboratories and institutions engaged in cancer research throughout the British Empire, none has a higher reputation than the Royal Cancer Hospital and its associated Chester Beatty Research Institute. We therefore welcome the republication in one attractive volume of a selection of papers which issued from these laboratories during the period 1935–39 (London: Royal Cancer Hospital (Free). 16*s*.). These had previously been published in many different journals in Britain and the United States, and their assembly will prove of great convenience to many workers in this field. Greatest importance will probably be attached to the series of papers by Prof. E. L. Kennaway and his colleagues on the synthesis and properties of carcinogenic compounds, which probably embodies the most notable contribution to cancer research during the last decade. Other valuable papers deal with the physical aspects of low-voltage, high-voltage and radium therapy and with topics concerning the pathology of cancers. The Institution is to be congratulated on this fine record of its work.

Venereal Disease Control

IN an address delivered at the Third Pennsylvania Health Institute (*Med. Rec.*, New York, Jan. 1943) Colonel Edgar Erskine Hume states that, during the War of 1914–18, General Pershing issued orders to the American Expeditionary Forces on the following lines: (*a*) education in sex hygiene and the nature and prevention of venereal diseases; (*b*) prophylaxis; (*c*) physical examinations; (*d*) repression of prostitution; (*e*) reporting sources of infection with dispensary treatment of infected civilians where possible; (*f*) court martial of men who contracted venereal disease; and (*g*) treatment of venereal disease at the front, thereby removing any possible temptation of men to become infected, and so get sent to the base. Although Pershing's programme did much good and was far in advance of that of any other country, seven million days of service were lost and a total of 338,746 soldiers were treated for venereal disease. In spite of the large number of cases, venereal disease is less prevalent in the army than in corresponding civil life. The rate of venereal disease in the United States Army has been reduced from 175 per 1,000 in 1904 to about 34 or 36, and has never been above 50 since 1926.

Murine Typhus in Bogotá

IN a preliminary note (*Bol. Of. San. Panam.*, 21, 1090; 1942) on this subject, Dr. Luis Patino-Camargo, director of the National Institute of Epidemiology and Medical Research at Bogotá, states that to date eight strains of the typhus rickettsia type have been found and classified in Colomba. He maintains that all these forms may be reduced to epidemic typhus, murine typhus and Tobia spotted fever. In three different places in Bogotá cases of typhus have occurred apparently caused by an endemic virus carried by fleas and maintained in wild rats. The writer, therefore, concludes that an intensive attack should be undertaken in Bogotá against these animals.

Standardization of Overhead Power Supply Lines

H. Willott Taylor and K. L. May, in a paper entitled "Standardization in Great Britain of Single-Circuit Overhead Lines up to 33 kV.", presented recently in London before the Institution of Electrical Engineers, consider that standardization can be done in a rational manner which will avoid any likelihood of stultification of new ideas; the preparation of suitable standard designs of overhead lines could be undertaken by a standing committee of the British

Standards Institution. Some of the Electricity Commissioners' regulations are reviewed with particular reference to their latest modifications for light lines. Details are given of the design evolved by the British Electrical and Allied Industries Research Association for light high-voltage lines up to 22 kV. which is now being considered by the B.S.I. With slight modifications, this design can be adaptable for 33-kV. working and also for heavier conductors. An alternative design, employing wood 'H' poles and suspension insulators, is suggested for special cases. A low-voltage design is also detailed and recommended.

The design covered by the draft B.S. specification is suggested for general adoption in Great Britain for high-voltage lines up to 22 kV. with conductors of 0·04 sq. in. or less. With minor modifications this design could also be used for the larger sizes of conductors and for 33-kV. working. To meet special local conditions, an 'H' pole suspension type of line could be provided. Standard designs for insulators, clamps, joints, stay rods, etc., should be prepared and be obtainable from any of the usual suppliers. A joint meeting between the supply undertakers and the railway companies should be arranged to consider whether modifications to the present standard conditions for railway crossings are not justifiable in the light of up-to-date experience. A discussion between supply undertakers and Post Office authorities is desirable, to determine whether the present somewhat onerous conditions required by the latter could not be modified considerably, and greater use made of 'joint user' poles.

Trade Unionism and Scientific Workers

UNDER the title "British Trade Unionism", the Association of Scientific Workers has issued a short study course for scientific workers prepared by Dr. J. Kuczynski and a study group of the Central London Branch, which was formed early in 1942, on trade union history with special reference to the development of non-manual organization and the history of the Association of Scientific Workers in particular. The booklet is in five chapters: why trade unions were formed in Great Britain and how they were developed; how scientific workers came to found a trade union; a short history of the Trades Union Congress; the structure of the Trades Union Congress; and the story of the Association of Scientific Workers. Of these the second and last show a certain lack of proportion and perspective. Within the limits imposed by pamphlet size, however, the first and the last three chapters give a concise—but biased, not to say prejudiced—account of the development of trade unionism in Great Britain and the association of professional defence organizations of scientific workers with this movement. Limitations of size, however, cannot excuse the paucity of the bibliography and the absence of bibliographic detail. The writers would do well to remember that history and propaganda are ill consorts.

Department of Scientific and Industrial Research: Appointments

THE Lord President of the Council has appointed Dr. A. Parker to be director of fuel research in the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. Dr. Parker joined the staff of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in 1928 as assistant director of water pollution research. He had previously been engaged for some ten years on research for the gas industry, including full-scale experimental work, as senior research chemist to the Joint Committee of the University of Leeds and the Institution of Gas Engineers. Since the outbreak of War he has been acting-director of water pollution research. He has served for many years on the Council of the Institution of Chemical Engineers and has been a vice-president of the Institution.

Mr. E. Barnard has been appointed principal assistant secretary in the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. Mr. Barnard joined the administrative staff of the Department in 1919, and has been director of food investigation since 1934.

Mr. R. O'F. Oakley and Mr. G. R. D. Hogg have been appointed assistant secretaries in the Department. Mr. Oakley joined the administrative staff of the Department in 1920, after previous Government service in the Patent Office. He became assistant to the director of fuel research in 1938, but since 1940 his services have been lent to the Ministry of Home Security as deputy chief adviser, Research and Experiments Department. Mr. Hogg joined the administrative staff of the Department in 1920, and was appointed establishment officer in the Department on the outbreak of the War.

Announcements

SIR HENRY DALE, president of the Royal Society and director of the Royal Institution, has been awarded the Harben Gold Medal by the Royal Institute of Public Health and Hygiene.

MR. P. I. DEE, University lecturer in physics in the University of Cambridge, has been appointed to the chair of natural philosophy in the University of Glasgow as from October 1 next. The chair becomes vacant by the retirement under the age limit of Prof. E. Taylor Jones.

THE Pilgrim Trust has purchased the residue of Newton's library which was being offered for sale (see NATURE, April 10, p. 416). Scientific workers and other students will welcome the news that this unique historical material will be preserved in Great Britain.

THE following have been elected officers of the Royal Astronomical Society for the ensuing year: *President*, Prof. E. A. Milne, Rouse Ball professor of mathematics, University of Oxford; *Treasurer*: Mr. J. H. Reynolds; *Secretaries*: Dr. H. R. Hulme, chief assistant, Royal Observatory, Greenwich; and Mr. D. H. Sadler, superintendent of the "Nautical Almanac"; *Foreign Secretary*: Sir Arthur Eddington, Plumian professor of astronomy, Cambridge; *Council*: Miss M. G. Adam, chief assistant (astronomy), University Observatory, Oxford; Dr. E. C. Bullard, Smithson research fellow of the Royal Society; Prof. J. A. Carroll, professor of natural philosophy, University of Aberdeen; Dr. T. G. Cowling, lecturer in mathematics, University of Manchester; Mr. F. J. Hargreaves; Dr. A. Hunter; Captain W. N. McClean; Dr. G. C. McVittie, reader in mathematics, University of London (King's College); Prof. L. M. Milne-Thomson, professor of mathematics, Royal Naval College, Greenwich; Mr. H. W. Newton; Mr. F. J. Sellers; and Mr. W. M. Witchell.