

In September, on the other hand, the opposite distribution prevailed.

From an examination of the detailed summaries it would appear that the greatest daily rainfall, 140 mm. (5.51 in.), occurred on April 1 at Lívastøl, a station in lat. 59° N., long. 6° E. Only nine daily falls exceeding 4 in. were reported in the year under notice, and, with one exception, these all occurred in the south. A very useful table is given showing the height above sea-level and geographical co-ordinates of all the stations, which can thus be readily identified on the map.

R. C. M.

PLANT DISEASES IN THE WEST INDIES.

VARIOUS root diseases which cause serious loss in crops of cacao, coffee, limes, and arrowroot in the West Indies have been investigated by Mr. W. Nowell, whose conclusions are published in the West Indian Bulletin (vol. xvi., No. 1). In all cases the roots are attacked by the mycelium of species of *Rosellinia*, a cosmopolitan genus of fungi which has long been known to include several parasitic species. In most cases the source of infection has proved to be either the forest stumps left to decay when the land was originally cleared, or, in the case of cacao, the stumps of shade trees, such as bread fruit and avocado pear. The fungus establishes itself on the dead stumps as a saprophyte, and from these the mycelium spreads to the healthy roots of the crop. The general conditions which favour the spread of the parasites and the most suitable methods of isolating the infected area and controlling the disease are carefully discussed.

In the West Indian Bulletin (vol. xvi., Nos. 2 and 3) Mr. W. Nowell gives a first report on an investigation of the internal disease of cotton bolls in the West Indies. The young lint is badly stained, and in severe cases more or less completely rotted, by the action of bacteria or of certain specific fungi, which are described in the first of the two papers. Four distinct species of fungi have been isolated and studied in culture. They appear to be all closely related, and are probably to be referred to the genus *Nematospora*. Further investigation is needed, however, to determine the systematic position of the genus. The results of the experiments recorded in the second bulletin show that infection results from the attack of certain cotton-stainers, bugs, *Nezara viridula* and *Dysdercus spp.*, which puncture the ovary walls in order to reach the seeds. The damage caused by the bugs includes the death of a certain proportion of the seeds, and possibly a localised discoloration of lint in young bolls; they are, however, the agents by which the fungi and bacteria are introduced into the ovary, and there produce the characteristic boll disease.

MINERAL NOMENCLATURE AND COLOUR.

A PAPER by Mr. Edgar T. Wherry on "The Nomenclature and Classification of the Native Element Minerals" (Journ. Washington Acad. Sci., vol. vii., p. 447, August, 1917) is remarkable for its advocacy of the use of adjectival prefixes for varieties, rather than special or compound names, which involve, as may be remarked, an additional tax upon the memory. This attitude is so very rare among scientific men that the attention of all naturalists may be directed to it. Mr. Wherry thus gives us "mercuriferous silver" for one end of the amalgam series and "argentiferous mercury" for the other, while the former name swallows up arquerite, bordosite, and kongsbergite. "Rhodiferous gold" replaces rhodite and "ferriferous nickel" awaruite, josephinite, octtibeite, and souesite. The realisation that time is very often lost and

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not gained by the use of technical names instead of descriptive word-groupings will make mineralogists regard Mr. Wherry's work with favour. His paper, however, is much more than a revision of nomenclature, since the element minerals are critically reviewed, with a number of valuable references to recent work.

Messrs. T. L. Watson and R. E. Beard have made a careful study of "The Colour of Amethyst, Rose, and Blue Varieties of Quartz" (Proc. U.S. Nat. Museum, vol. liii., p. 553, 1917), and they conclude that amethyst is coloured by manganese, probably distributed as submicroscopic colloidal particles of an oxide; that the colouring matter in rose quartz is organic; and that the blueness of quartz, as seen in many igneous rocks, is due to the behaviour of light on minute hair-like inclusions of rutile, as previous writers have suggested. No explanation is proposed for the absence of a purple colour in certain examples of rose quartz which show on analysis quantities of manganese in excess of those in ordinary amethyst; the point seems worth raising, since the authors reject the idea that the colour in amethyst depends on the state of oxidation.

A VILLAGE COMMUNITY IN PAPUA.

IN the thirty-ninth volume of the Transactions of the Royal Society of South Australia Dr. B. Malinowski, Robert Mond travelling student in the University of London, gives a valuable account of the people living on the seaboard of south-eastern Papua between Cape Rodney and Orangerie Bay.¹

The most important native village is Mailu, on a small island near the coast, the inhabitants of which take a prominent place in the trade of southern Papua, and in certain industries, such as pottery and canoe-building, are more advanced than the mainland people. Dr. Malinowski's descriptions refer principally to Mailu itself but the people of the mainland district, who call themselves Magi, are occasionally noticed.

Following Dr. Seligman in his account of the "Melanesians of British New Guinea," Dr. Malinowski regards the Mailu as the most eastern branch of the western Papuo-Melanesian population, the Bonabona division of the southern Massim being in contact with their eastern border. The sociology and culture of the Mailu are of the same type as those of the Koita, so fully described by Seligman. Like the Koita, too, they speak a non-Melanesian language, though this is not explicitly stated by Dr. Malinowski, whose information was obtained by means of the Motu language, which is understood by most Mailu men.

The unit of social life is the village community. The village is a compact group of houses regularly built on land. The houses, on piles, face each other on each side of the village street, with their backs to the sea and the gardens. The men's club-houses, or *dubus*, have now almost died out. The community was the joint owner of the land and fishing rights, and within certain limits of hunting rights. In legal arrangements, institutions, and warfare the community acted together. It is divided into clans, and the wife comes from outside and moves to the home of her husband. Children belong to their father's clan.

Dr. Malinowski gives details of the household, with diagrams of the building. A genealogical census of Mailu village was made to obtain the kinship system and names. Personal names of elders were found to

¹ "The Natives of Mailu: Preliminary Results of the Robert Mond Research Work in British New Guinea." By Dr. B. Malinowski, Cracow, Robert Mond Travelling Student in the University of London. Transactions and Proceedings of the Royal Society of South Australia, vol. xxxix., Adelaide, December, 1915, pp. 494-706, plates xxvi-xliii.