

mycology, etc., in the different types of equipment, their use and maintenance; (2) the demonstration of the equipment to interested potential users in the Colonies; (3) the consideration of modifications to machinery to meet special conditions of tropical use. A comprehensive reference library of spraying- and dusting-machinery manufacturers' literature is to be formed for the use of visitors. A committee on which the Colonial Office, the Imperial College, and the Agricultural Engineers' Association are represented has been set up and is responsible for the running of the pool and for the selection of machinery offered by any manufacturers for inclusion in the pool. Mr. A. E. H. Higgins, Imperial College of Science and Technology, London, S.W.7, is in charge of the pool.

#### Hilger Journal

THE first number of the *Hilger Journal*, published in November 1954, is an illustrated pamphlet of eight pages of which approximately one-quarter is devoted to abstracts of recently published papers on spectroscopy. The issue contains also an account of the Hilger equipment installed in the new research laboratories of the Quasic Arc Company, Bilston, Staffordshire, and an extract concerning the use of optical methods from a talk by Dr. J. Haslam, of the Plastic Division of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., on physical methods in the analysis of plastic materials. With regard to a new and complete direct-direct spectrograph, known as a polychromator, the merits and demerits of the two main systems of spectrochemical analysis, photographic and direct reading, are explained. A special Schwarz thermopile which can be used as a replacement in certain types (not Hilger) of infra-red spectrometers has been designed and details of its application are to be studied; but meanwhile a preliminary catalogue description has been prepared and is available on request from Hilger and Watts, Ltd., 98 St. Pancras Way, London, N.W.1.

#### Central Leather Research Institute, India: News Bulletin

THE Central Leather Research Institute, which was opened in Madras in 1953, is one of a chain of twelve National Research Institutes established by the Government of India under the aegis of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. The scope of its work is to "carry out research in all aspects of leather industry, to solve problems which confront particularly the Indian leather industry and also to contribute to the international leather research which is being directed to extend leather science". It has now issued its first monthly bulletin (1, No. 1; August 1954; pp. 26. From the Institute, Adyar, Madras-20. Annual subscription Rs. 9 or 18s.; single issues Rs. 12). It is stated that each bulletin will contain abstracts, research papers of the Institute, other articles on leather technology and trade advertisements. In this issue, there are two articles. The first deals with "Some Aspects of Leather Manufacture" and is by Prof. B. M. Das, a recognized authority of long standing. Reference is made to the work of the Institute on the use of native barks to replace imported wattle extract, the presence of different tannins in avaram bark, rapid sole-leather tannages, new syntans from Indian coal-tar distillation products, basic aluminium salts in spray-dried powder form and tanning agents from mineral oil. The second article describes the improvement of the tanning properties of mangrove liquors

by modification of their acid and salt contents. The bulletin is well produced and of considerable interest in Britain, because the Institute seeks to improve the quality of the raw and crust-tanned hides and skins exported to this country.

#### Insecticide and Repellent Action of Certain Chemicals

A HANDBOOK giving the results of tests of insecticidal action and repellency on fifteen species of insects and arachnids of medical importance has been compiled by W. V. King, of the Agricultural Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, and published as Agriculture Handbook No. 69 under the title of "Chemicals evaluated as Insecticides and Repellents at Orlando, Fla." (pp. 397. Washington, D.C.: Govt. Printing Office, 1954; 2.25 dollars). Eleven thousand chemicals were included in the tests, each chemical being graded into one of four or five categories according to its efficiency. A brief description of the methods of testing is given. The results give some indication whether or not the chemical tested had marked insecticidal or repellent properties to the particular species of insect on which it was tested; but, in the absence of any information on the reproducibility and degree of variation of the results, it does not seem possible to assess whether the difference between the categories listed is really significant. A critical study of the test methods employed would add greatly to the value of the results. It is stated that the data are presented in the belief that they may prove useful to workers engaged in the development of new insecticides or in the study of the relation of chemical structure to insecticidal activity, and this may well prove to be so.

#### Medicine in the Atomic Age

THE November issue of *Medicine Illustrated* consists of a number of articles under two general headings: peaceful uses of atomic energy; and atomic warfare, medical aspects. Prof. J. Rotblat describes with admirable clarity for the layman the nature and production of radioisotopes, and Mr. N. Veall has the hard task of selecting examples of how these isotopes are used in investigation and diagnosis. Drs. R. Bodley Scott and R. M. Cunningham are clear in describing the uses of phosphorus-32 and iodine-131 for therapy, and Dr. R. J. Walton surveys the therapeutic uses of other radionuclides. Mr. H. Dunster, as a health physicist, explains how personal protection is achieved and how contaminated waste can be disposed of. Prof. K. Mather ends a good collection of papers with an admirable survey of the genetical price of radiation. On the medical aspects of atomic warfare, the authors are on a much 'stickier wicket' and, like the most skilled performers in such conditions, are guilty of many lapses from orthodoxy. However, few would dare to predict the future in this field, so that in general any stimulus to thought is good. From an illustrated journal one would have expected more pictures and less script, and surprisingly many of the illustrations are very poor; by far and away the best is an abstract from a case report by L. H. Hemplemann with coloured plates from *Medical Radiography and Photography*.

#### Aerosurvey by Photography

MR. A. D. DODDS-PARKER, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, will