Forerunner of the Bacteriological Institute of Argentina in Buenos Aires was the Voges Bacteriological Office, organized toward the end of the 19th century. In 1901, on the initiative of Dr. Carlos G. Malbrán, then President of the National Department of Health, a law was passed providing for the founding of an Institute of Bacteriology with a smallpox vaccination service, and the cornerstone of the Institute was laid October 11, 1904. It was opened July 10, 1916, and its first Director was the noted Professor Rudolfo Kraus of Vienna, who later headed the Butantan Institute of São Paulo, Brasil, and the Institute of Bacteriology of Chile. He was succeeded after eight years by Professor Alois Bachmann, who served until 1924. Since that time the Institute has been under the direction of Professor Alfredo Sordelli, and during his temporary absences, of Dr. Leopoldo Uriarte, Chief of the Plague Section, who has been connected with the Institute since its foundation.

The Bacteriological Institute is under the administration of the National Department of Health, a dependency of the Ministry of the Interior. Since 1932 its funds have been lumped with the budget of the Department of Health.

The four principal duties of the Institute are: manufacture of biologic products; diagnosis, and epidemiological studies of autochthonous communicable diseases; research; and, finally, the control of biologic and certain other products used for medicinal or hygienic purposes, such as insecticides, raticides, disinfectants, filters, sterilizers, etc., submitted for acceptance to the National Department of Health.

On recommendation of the Tenth Pan American Sanitary Conference, the Institute was selected by the Health Committee of the League of Nations as the depository for the international distribution in South America of standards to be used in determining the strength and quality of certain products such as adrenalin, digitalis, glandular preparations, vitamin preparations, antitoxins, etc.

* One of a series of papers describing the principal scientific institutions in Latin America.
The number of analyses made in 1938 was 1,268, while 39,100 diagnostic investigations were made, including Wassermann, Kahn, Widal and other tests, examinations for parasites, etc.

Manufacturing of biologic products is carried on by the departments of Serumtherapy, Vaccines and Organotherapy. In 1938 the value of these products amounted to some 4,840,965.86 pesos (about $1,550,000.00). Expenses of the Institute were only about 262,000 pesos; less than the amount actually collected for products sold. About 90 percent of the sera, vaccines and glandular products are distributed free of charge to public hospitals, institutions, welfare services, Army and Navy hospitals, health centers, etc. Those remaining are sold through the Sales Office of the National Institute of Health. A considerable stock of essential materials is kept on hand at the Institute so that it is prepared to help not only in national emergencies, in for epidemics in neighboring countries.

In the field of research, attention is directed to the pathology of communicable disease in man and animals; the discovery of pathogenic organisms as yet unrecognized in the country; studies of the etiology of disease; immunological studies; bacteriological and serological methods; special problems including brucellosis, plague, bacillary dysentery, malaria, Chagas' disease, anthrax, "Texas fever," bovine hemoglobinuria, hookworm, diphtheria, etc.; studies of insects, ectoparasites, wild rodents, hosts and reservoirs of virus, etc., and the improvement of methods for manufacturing biologics. Special new sections have been created in recent years for work on brucellosis, psittacosis, venereal lymphogranuloma, and smallpox virus. It is expected that the diagnostic section will have to be enlarged as a result of increased demands on it since the passage of the venereal disease law with its premarital examination section. The law also provides that standards for the operation of private and official serological laboratories shall be set up by the National Department of Health. This will be an additional duty for the Institute, which intends to establish branch serological laboratories in various parts of the country.

The buildings of the Institute include a main edifice with 42 laboratories, facilities for the preparation of culture media, refrigeration rooms, immunization and blood-letting rooms, Library, lecture hall, business offices, etc.; and various pavilions including the Pasteur section, with 18 laboratories; the tuberculosis section, with 10 laboratories; the organo-therapy section, with two laboratories and three machine rooms; the brucellosis section, with special equipment to prevent accidental infections; the smallpox pavilion, and other special buildings.

Publications of the Institute include the Revista del Instituto Bacteriológico del Departamento Nacional de Higiene, which contains the
scientific reports of its research workers, and the *Folia Biológica*,
published by the Institute personnel, both being distributed free of
charge. Work done in the Institute must be reported to the Staff
Meetings before publication. Among the outstanding studies published
have been those on plague, rural plague, psittacosis, bacillary dysentery,
brucellosis, Chagas’ disease, and diphtheria.

The Institute, in the interest of public health, prepares from time to
time for various national medical journals, notices “To the Physician”
calling attention to unusual diseases, offering diagnostic facilities, and
so on.