The National Institute of Nutrition of Argentina was founded as a Municipal Institute in 1928 at the initiative of Dr. Pedro Escudero, and functioned as a dependency of the Rawson Hospital of Buenos Aires. In 1938, by Presidential decree, it was made a national institution. Dr. Escudero has been the Director since its creation.

The nature of the Institute's program has been described by the Director in the following words: "The basis of the preservation of the living being is his nutrition: life, vigor, reproduction, spirit, society, and morality depend on it. This is why the Institute is called one of Nutrition, and why it embraces the study of the life of man as a physical and moral entity, and of the society which he constitutes. The National Institute of Nutrition is not alone a hospital, although it treats patients; nor a biologic laboratory, though it analyzes life; nor a center of social studies, though it studies society, nor a social welfare office, although it assists the needy. It is all these together, but study is its core, its goal, its everything. It is substantially an instrument of government, the counsellor of social policy, the compass guiding social welfare."

The Institute functions as a center of biological, sociological, and economic investigation, as an educational medium for the training of experts and for the spread of modern principles of nutrition, and as a social welfare agency in the nutritional field.

The Institute has six divisions. That of Medical Action includes the out-patient department, with specialized clinics in all branches, and the intern department (clinical and surgical), departments of radiology, physiotherapy, and clinical analyses, and a pharmacy (drugs being distributed free to many patients). The Nutrition Division administers, in addition to the nutrition clinics, the department of social and economic information, and the Service of Nutrition (with a refectory where patients of the intern and extern departments have their meals), the Lactarium (mothers' milk collection and free distribution), the dispensary for nursing infants and a kindergarten where the food of the children is carefully supervised. The Research Division includes the Departments of microbiology, animal and vegetal microscopy, bromatologic chemistry, biologic chemistry, biology, and anaphylaxis and the Laboratory of Dietetic Technique. The Social Action Division is sub-divided

* One of a series of papers describing the principal scientific institutions in Latin America.
into departments of social investigation, welfare and prophylaxis. The Division of Educational Action is in charge of teaching the modern concepts of nutrition through the press, radio, movies, exhibitions, museum, and lectures. The Technical Division includes the National School of Dietetics and the two year course for physicians specializing in nutrition (associated with the School of Medicine).

In addition to his other duties, the Director of the Institute is Professor of the Nutrition Clinic and directs the Post-Graduate course in Nutrition, of the School of Medical Sciences of the University of Buenos Aires.

The Institute has three buildings: the Director's Office, the Division of Medical Action and the Nutrition Division are located at 4821 Díaz Vélez street; the National School of Dietetics and the Teaching Kitchen, the Lactarium, and the Dispensary for nursing infants, the Secretary's office, the Division of Social Action, the Educational Division, the Library and the Administrative Division at 3120 Córdoba street; and the Division of Research and its animals, at 2423 Pueyrredón street. The Institute also has a building housing about 100 young women from the interior of the country, holders of scholarships, who are attending the National School of Dietetics. (A number of scholarships to applicants from other Latin American countries are granted.)

The School of Dietetics, opened in 1935, and nationalized in 1938, offers to normal school graduates and holders of bachelor's degrees, a three year course equipping them to supervise the nutrition of healthy persons, that of patients under the control of a physician or medical institution, work in public, private, or scientific offices on economic, commercial or industrial problems related to nutrition, and for the teaching of biology, hygiene, and domestic science from the standpoint of foods and nutrition. Shorter courses for Auxiliares de Alimentación, or food assistants, capable of helping in kitchens, are given, as well as instruction for nurses wishing to specialize in nutrition.

The material food contribution given by the Institute is aimed especially at protecting large families. The refectorio (refectory or dining-room) was created by Dr. Escudero to serve those who need a well controlled nutrition but do not need hospitalization. They receive all types of help such as medicines, medical attention and food. The Institute is especially interested in the maintenance of the health of well individuals, from the nutritional and other standpoints—in the Director's phrase, "non-specific prophylaxis."

Under the auspices of the Institute there have been organized two scientific societies which meet periodically at its headquarters, the Ateneo de Clínica de la Nutrición (Athenaeum of the Nutrition Clinic), composed of physicians specializing in nutrition, who present at meetings the results of diet therapy or diet studies in their patients; and the Asociación Argentina de Dietología (Argentine Dietetics Association), made up of physicians, dietitians, and auxiliares.
Above: National Institute of Nutrition, Argentina. Building at 3120 Córdoba, housing the Administrative Offices, Social Welfare Division, Outpatient clinic, Healthy person clinic, National School of Dietetics, Teaching Kitchen, Lactarium and Dispensary for Nursing Infants, Quarters of Medical Fellows, Pharmacy, Education Division, Food Analysis, Clinical Analysis, Dietetics Technique, and Radiology Laboratories.

Below: Lunchroom of the “Mitre” Kindergarten. The Nutrition is under the supervision of the National Institute of Nutrition.
Institute of Endocrinology, Montevideo, Uruguay. Above: Laboratory animals; Center: One of the laboratories; Below: Staff of the Central Laboratory