

The great strides made by the Russian academy since the revolution and the improvement of general economic conditions is indicated in its report for 1924. During that year the academy held 64 meetings at which 112 papers were read discussing 85 important questions. Four hundred additional papers were read at meetings of different sections of the academy. In addition, the academy published 55 scientific books, copies of which were sent abroad; and 78 expeditions were sent to the Urals, Siberia, Mongolia, Central Asia, North and South Russia, etc. The physiological laboratory carried on research on the occipital lobes of the higher animals. Other departments prepared a catalogue on the life, culture, social structure and religions of India; and studied the biochemical properties of human blood. Important work was also done by the Asiatic museum which prepared for publication 340 volumes of Dao-Jsan and other Chinese works.

The academy has also stimulated an interest in applied science. Researches and experiments have been carried on in the separation of metals by nitrogen under high temperature and pressure; Crimean lakesal has been analyzed; and a new system of making seismographs has been invented.

The academy works in close cooperation with economic organizations and with the government. It has prepared maps and other material for the government and is working with the State Planning Commission on a study of Russian natural resources. Other government commissions with which the academy cooperates are conducting studies in race problems, tropical countries, the Polar regions, literature, dictionaries and bibliographies.

Important are Professor Steklov's studies in the basic problems of mathematical physics; Professor Numerov's astronomical studies; Professor Joffe's studies on the atomic structure of matter, and Professor Pavlov's studies in biology and pathology.

The academy has already reestablished many of its contacts with scientists of other countries. Charles D. Walcott, of the Smithsonian Institution of Washington, D. C.; Fridjof Nansen, of Norway; A. J. Thompson, of England, and scientists of various other countries are honorary members of the academy. Among the academy's corresponding members are Dr. Alexis Carrel, of New York, and Professor A. A. Michelson, of the University of Chicago; Louis Bauer, of Washington, D. C.; Madame Curie and Albert Einstein.

#### THE DORMITORIES OF THE HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL

MR. HAROLD S. VANDERBILT, of New York City, has given to the Harvard University Medical School for the new dormitories the sum of \$575,000, in addition to the \$125,000 that he gave last April for the installation of a gymnasium within the dormitories. Since the latest architects' estimate of the total cost of the land and buildings is \$1,327,865, and since the building fund now has \$445,000 and expects a contribution of \$300,000 from the Harvard corporation, Mr. Vanderbilt's gift will permit immediate construction

of this much-needed addition to the Medical School; with the entire expense provided for in advance. The plan to provide a special dormitory for the Harvard Medical School was first undertaken as long ago as September, 1923. Since that time subscriptions have been raised in the following amounts from the following sources:

1,486 doctors .....	\$112,984
594 lay donors .....	207,026
Expected from Harvard University .....	300,000
Total .....	\$620,010

The new dormitory will provide housing for 250 men, who are now occupying often unsuitable quarters in scattered sections of Boston and Cambridge. A dining hall will be included, which will be convertible into a medical auditorium. Here it is expected that physicians can be seen and heard by students, faculty, profession and public, and the larger medical societies may hold their future annual assemblies.

Moreover, it has been found that the regular weekly lectures given under the auspices of the school to the public at large have outgrown the present amphitheaters in the medical school, which accommodate only about 300. The large auditorium in the new dormitory will be available for the lectures hereafter.

Plans for the new building have been drawn by Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch & Abbott. Although these may be the final plans, the critical study and analysis of them has yet to be completed by the fund committee, by Dr. David L. Edsall, dean of the Harvard Medical School, and by other authorities.

#### HONORARY DEGREES CONFERRED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

As has already been reported in *SCIENCE*, the University of Cambridge, in connection with the meeting at Cambridge of the International Astronomical Union, conferred the honorary degree of doctor of science upon five leading members of the union. The ceremony took place in the Senate House on July 21, the vice-chancellor, Dr. A. C. Seward, master of Downing, presiding.

In presenting a general greeting to the astronomers, the public orator, Mr. T. R. Glover, as reported in the *London Times*, reminded them that they had come to the university of Newton, and further, he referred to the discussion between Adam and the Archangel in "Paradise Lost," turning upon the very problems to which the astronomers were giving their lives. He quoted in the version of "Gulielmus Hogaues" (William Hog) the lines of the Archangel: "With centric and eccentric scribbled o'er." The Archangel, he said, was very properly on the side of eternity and willing