were given year, and conditions control of toxic extent over the five years, though a hand involved. There are brought to light many outside for formed in Denmark than in this original plan has it been both necessary and possible to modify the original plan but still to provide for essentials.

The report deals with various aspects of the Service in some detail. The Occupational Hygiene Team, which was formed jointly with the Occupational Health Unit of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, has been doing valuable field work in the detection and control of toxic hazards for the member firms, and also for outside bodies through enquiries submitted to the School of Hygiene.

The Casualty Service has not changed its form to any great extent over the five years, though a hand clinic has recently been introduced.

The Physiotherapy Department’s work has increased each year, and in the year under review 31,089 treatments were given to 4,084 patients. Patients are referred not only by the Service, but also by the staffs of local hospitals and general practitioners.

The Social Service Department is a recent innovation. The social service officer deals with many medico-social problems which are referred by the medical officers or by the management of firms. This has been shown to be valuable in an area where many of the firms are so small that they have no welfare service of their own.

Farnham Park Recuperative Centre is an integral part of the Service with accommodation for 66 in-patients and 20 out-patients. In five years 2,432 men and women have been treated here. There are full facilities for occupational therapy, physiotherapy, and remedial gymnastics, with a balanced programme of education and recreation. The facilities provided by the social service department are particularly valuable in this centre. There is close cooperation with the Government Training Centre in the rehabilitation and assessment of patients.

The statistical report gives a general picture of the amount and type of work done in the various clinics and departments, and of the types of defects found at medical examinations. It is unfortunate that progressive simplification of the records system on the grounds of economy has prevented comparison of the statistics for more than the past three years. It is also a pity that it has not been possible to present comprehensive morbidity statistics for all this large industrial population, but the multiplicity of organizations obviously make this difficult.

The report shows that the sponsors, council of management, and staff can be well satisfied with their achievements in this important experiment. However, its financial position is not very healthy. During 1951–52 there was a deficit of about £3,500 and there is an overdraft of £12,778. The Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust is now only supporting the Occupational Hygiene Team. The North-West Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board contributes two-thirds of the total cost of the Service. This meets a large proportion of the cost of the work carried out at the Recuperative Centre and in the therapeutic clinics.

From the accounts it is not possible to get more than a rough estimate of the cost of the preventive and casualty part of the services as opposed to the therapeutic services, which are really provided on behalf of the National Health Service.

However, the report will be of value to all those who are interested in the development of a comprehensive occupational health service.

A. Raffle


What are the dangers in exposure to ionizing radiations? How can they be minimized? These questions were considered at a conference sponsored jointly by the Institute of Biology and the Atomic Scientists Association in October, 1950, the proceedings of which are reported

A. Raffle
in this volume. The conference, the first of its kind in this country, saw the gathering together of a group of distinguished contributors, each one an expert in his own special subject. The more spectacular events in the development of atomic physics for scientific, industrial, and medical purposes are well known but the diverse and rapidly widening applications of all this new knowledge, already affecting the lives of large numbers of people, are probably not generally realized. Those who are responsible for health and safety must see to it that progress in this field, implying as it must, a continuing increase in the number of people regularly exposed to radiation, is not accompanied by increased risks to the health of those concerned.

The first set of papers deals with the many and various ways in which living cells may respond to exposure to ionizing radiations. These effects depend on the physiological condition of the cell, on the duration of exposure, and on the type or quality of the radiation.

The long-term hazard of atomic energy is discussed in detail by a group of eminent geneticists and the reader is left in no doubt that small amounts of radiation exposure, apparently innocuous to the individual, may result, nevertheless, in the impairment of future generations.

The principles of protection are considered. There is an interesting description of the methods of estimating so-called tolerance levels. A number of specialists in protection relate their experiences in hospitals and research laboratories. At the Harwell Atomic Energy Research Establishment it has been possible to provide adequate control over all types of radiation hazard but the cost of complete protection is great and it is necessary to find a balance between economy and safety.

Although the majority of the papers in this volume are concerned, in the main, with the effects of irradiation of the body from the outside, the rather different problems which occur when radioactive substances are introduced into the body are discussed briefly. The possibilities of protection against massive doses of ionizing radiation are examined; at present no effective method is available.

It is appropriate that the final contributors to the discussions are concerned explicitly with the moral issues which appear to be especially relevant to this subject.

Here, then, is an authoritative and balanced statement of the position in this vital field. Although the matter contained in many of the contributions is of a quality which demands a certain amount of scientific knowledge for its complete understanding, any reader will be able to form a useful picture of the biological problems which arise in connexion with atomic energy.

A. McLEAN

The Medical Research Council: Opportunities for Appointment to the Scientific Staff. (Pp. 19.) Obtained on request from the Establishment Officer, Medical Research Council, 38, Old Queen Street, London, S.W.1.

This booklet gives a brief account of the constitution and field of work of the Medical Research Council, which now has 45 research establishments. Most of them are based on hospitals and universities, although its largest and probably best known establishment is the National Institute for Medical Research at Mill Hill, London. The Council is not constitutionally a government department since it administers grants-in-aid provided annually by Parliament, and selects and appoints its own staff. Its policy is to offer the members of its scientific staff, who may be medically qualified or otherwise, careers and salaries which are as good as those offered to the holders of appointments of similar status in the universities. The Council leaves it to the director of a unit or research group to recommend suitable persons for appointment to the staff. Thus prospective candidates should apply to the director of the establishment at which they would like to work.

The booklet gives terms of service and conditions of work of its staff and also information about scholarships, fellowships, and grants, which may be awarded by the Council.

One of its most useful contents is a list of research establishments with addresses and names of directors. There are at least 11 research units or groups doing occupational health research.

RICHARD SCHILLING

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Review in a later issue is not precluded by notice here of books recently received.)


Biological Hazards of Atomic Energy

A. McLean

doi: 10.1136/oem.10.2.136-a

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