

cils, either singly or in regional groups, the duty of securing adequate facilities for the diagnosis and treatment of persons suffering, or suspected to be suffering, from cancer. It is estimated that at present only one case in four which might hopefully be treated by modern methods is so treated.

These major local authorities will be required to submit their arrangements for the minister's approval within a reasonable time. Before doing so they will consult the Radium Commission and representatives of the voluntary hospitals and the medical practitioners in each locality. It is proposed to have diagnostic centers at which expert clinical advice on a team basis will be available to all. In general these centers will be in the large towns, and patients will come to them from the surrounding areas. Facilities for treatment will be provided in voluntary hospitals, whose services it is hoped to utilize to the utmost, or in hospitals under the control of local authorities. The government intends to bring the most modern methods of treatment, whether by surgery, radium or deep x-rays—alone or in combination—within the reach of every sufferer. This will mean the provision of additional facilities for treatment at appropriate local centers, both by developing existing centers and providing new ones.

It is estimated that when the service is in full operation the total additional expenditure will amount to about £600,000 a year for England and Wales and £100,000 for Scotland. In meeting this expenditure local authorities will be assisted by exchequer grants which will be approximately equivalent to 50 per cent. of the additional cost incurred. But the grant will be made according to the "weighted population" formula, and the 50 per cent. will be scaled up or down according to the needs of the area. In some of the poorest areas the exchequer grant will amount to 80 per cent. It will probably take four or five years before the cost of the service reaches £700,000 a year. At first there may be some scarcity of the skilled workers needed.

The bill enables the Minister to lend up to £500,000 to the National Radium Trust for the purchase of radium and other radio-active substances and of equipment for radio-therapeutic treatment. The trust has already arranged an option for a substantial purchase of radium from Canada at a fixed price over the next five years. The bill will prohibit the dissemination of advertisements for "cancer cures" to the lay public.

#### COMMITTEE OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION ON THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF SCIENCE

As has been stated in *SCIENCE*, at the recent meeting in Cambridge of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, there was formed a committee on the Division for the Social and International Relations of Science. The committee, under the chairman-

ship of Sir Richard Gregory, includes the president and general officers of the association *ex officio* and

Sir Daniel Hall, Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins, Sir John Russell and Lord Stamp (*vice-chairmen*), Professor F. C. Bartlett, Professor J. D. Bernal, Professor P. M. S. Blackett, Mr. Ritchie Calder, Mr. A. M. Carr-Saunders, Professor S. Chapman, Dr. C. H. Desch, Professor A. C. G. Egerton, Professor H. J. Fleure, Mr. E. W. Gilbert, Professor N. F. Hall, Mr. R. F. Harrod, Professor A. V. Hill, Sir Clement Hindley, Professor L. Hogben, Dr. L. E. C. Hughes, Dr. J. S. Huxley, Mr. D. Caradog Jones, Professor H. Levy, Dr. C. S. Myers, Mr. Max Nicholson, Sir John Orr, Professor J. C. Philip, Professor J. G. Smith, Professor R. G. Stapledon, Professor F. J. M. Stratton, Professor F. E. Weiss, Mr. H. G. Wells, Mr. J. S. Wilson and Dr. S. Zuckerman.

The London *Times* states that a circular has been prepared for issue to institutions at home and abroad, indicating the main purposes of the division as "the objective study of the effects of advances in science on communities, and reciprocally the effects of social conditions upon the progress of science; and the encouragement of the application of science to promote the well-being of society." The committee is empowered to arrange meetings of the division, to coordinate work dealing with the social relations of science, both at home and abroad, to be prepared to act in a consultative capacity and to supply information to organizations, individuals and the public, to initiate and carry out inquiries and research and to secure their publication.

Two of the most important functions of the division will be to coordinate the large amount of work which has already been done or undertaken by numerous existing organizations, and to make the best use of the association's platform to bring the results of such work before the public. It is hoped to cooperate with the International Council of Scientific Unions, which has already set up a Committee on Science and its Social Relations with a view to preparing a report of worldwide scope.

#### BIOLOGICAL ABSTRACTS

A RECENT issue of *SCIENCE*<sup>1</sup> contained the announcement of the 1939 publication plan for *Biological Abstracts*. Under this plan there is to be a breakdown into five parts according to subject-matter, ranging in cost from \$4.00 to \$9.00, with \$25.00 the charge for all parts brought under one cover.

During the next year, as during the current one, it is hoped that societies will continue their contribution of \$2.00 a member toward the support of *Biological Abstracts*. It is highly desirable that this support be given during the transition period to the new plan, which has won well-nigh universal approval. For the present year five societies took such action, while sev-

<sup>1</sup> *SCIENCE*, 88: 294, 1938.