ice requirements and security standards.

Under the research associateship program, each applicant must possess a Ph.D. in one of the physical sciences or in a related field, or he must have completed all of the academic requirements for the Ph.D. and be scheduled to receive the degree at the next commencement exercise of his academic institution.

The program further provides that each associate be appointed by NRL to the grade of GS-11 (base pay, $5940 per annum), the normal entrance grade in the Federal Civil Service system for an applicant having a Ph.D. degree in the physical sciences but who does not have additional professional experience. The length of an appointment is 1 year. Further information may be obtained by communicating with Dr. W. G. Torpey, Personnel Officer, Naval Research Laboratory, Washington 25, D.C.

New Synthetic Hormone

■ A new synthetic hormone, said to be three times as potent as aldosterone, is announced in the 20 Dec. 1955 issue of the *Journal of the American Chemical Society*. An article by John A. Hogg, Frank H. Lincoln, Robert W. Jackson, and William P. Schneider, all of the Upjohn Company, Kalamazoo, Mich., indicates that the new chemical is more effective in laboratory tests than any other known substance in stimulating the body's retention of salt, an ability that is characteristic of some adrenal cortical hormones.

Not produced in the body, the new synthetic hormone is described as a methyl derivative of fluorohydrocortisone acetate. It has no known usefulness in human therapy at present.

The new substance is about 40 times as powerful as hydrocortisone in its ability to influence glycogen deposition, another indication of hormonal activity. A second methyl hormone was also reported in the same article. This substance, named 2-methylhydrocortisone acetate, is ten times as active as hydrocortisone in the glycogen deposition assay.

New Medical Center at Brookhaven National Laboratory

The Atomic Energy Commission has announced that a medical research center, including a nuclear reactor designed specifically for medical research and treatment, will be constructed at Brookhaven National Laboratory. Brookhaven, one of the AEC's major research laboratories, is operated by Associated Universities, Inc.

Scheduled for completion in 2 years at a cost of $6 million exclusive of design and engineering, the new facility will house a nuclear reactor, a research hospital, an industrial medicine branch, and research divisions in medical physics, pathology, microbiology, biochemistry, physiology and clinical chemistry.

The present medical facility at Brookhaven consists of some 20 temporary buildings that were part of Camp Upton Hospital when the site was used by the Army during World War II. As the medical program has grown, the buildings have become inadequate as well as difficult and costly to staff and maintain.

The medical reactor at Brookhaven will be one of the first two in the United States. In July the AEC announced that the University of California had filed license applications with the commission for construction and operation of a medical reactor on the campus of the University of California at Los Angeles.

Medical research and treatment with neutrons have been conducted at Brookhaven since 1951 by utilizing the general-purpose research reactor already in operation there. Treatment of patients at this reactor, however, requires that other work cease during the medical run, interrupting the research programs of other laboratory departments. The new reactor, designed specifically for medical utilization, will make available a source of neutrons for experimental work on brain cancer, as well as a number of special short-lived radioisotopes, permitting a much wider range of medical investigation than is now under way.

Design specifications for the medical reactor are now being completed by Brookhaven scientists and engineers. When they are completed, proposals will be sought from firms in the equipment manufacturing field for fabrication of the reactor and its associated control equipment.

Reading Science Writing

A pilot study of how the public reacts to science news has recently been completed and a detailed report is being prepared. The study was carried out by the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan among 200 people of varying backgrounds, social characteristics, and experiences. It was sponsored by the National Association of Science Writers and New York University with the aid of a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. More than half of the interviews were taken in metropolitan Chicago and the rest in two rural counties in upstate New York—Onondaga and Cortland.

One of the chief purposes of the pilot study was to determine whether or not a larger survey would be worthwhile; both SRC and NASW now believe that it would. Some of the findings of the test survey follow:

More than three-quarters of the 200 persons interviewed read science news in their local papers. One-third of the sampling had attended college, far more than would be found in a typical U.S. cross-section.

One in four of those interviewed said they read all the science items that were published in their papers.

More than a third of the 200 persons interviewed wanted more science news. This point was further developed when they were asked to name what types of news they were willing to omit to make room for more science reporting. Some mentioned cutting down on sports news; others said society news. A sizable proportion of even those listed as occasional science news readers wanted some expansion in coverage, thus indicating what SRC calls "a potential for growth of the science audience at all levels of readership."

More than half of those interviewed were satisfied with the presentation of science news. Those who were dissatisfied complained of inaccuracies, sensationalism, insufficient details, too-technical language, and so forth. (These same points were mentioned by scientists who answered an earlier NASW-New York University questionnaire several years ago.)

All but three of the 200 interviewed had heard of the Salk vaccine. This represented close to saturation coverage. The pilot study found that the atomic bomb was the most common area for nonmedical science reading.

More than nine out of ten respondents had definite impressions of scientists, and the characteristics mentioned most frequently were superior intellect, dedication to work, and absent-mindedness.

Education, especially some high-school or college study in a field of science, was "positively related" to the desire to read more science news items. Apparently the avid science reader with intellectual preferences is the one who is most likely to want more science news.

Scientists in the News

OSCAR MARZKE, associate director of research for materials at the Naval Research Laboratory, Washington, D.C., has been appointed director of research at NRL. He succeeds EDWARD O. HULBURT, who is retiring from Civil Service and who has been named senior scientist for the U.S. National Committee for the International Geophysical Year.

PETER KING, superintendent of the