

October 16, 1945

Mr. K. E. Johnson,
Armour Chemical Division,
Armour and Company,
1355 West 31st Street,
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I am very glad to reply to your letter of October 2 and to outline to you briefly our manner of work. Before doing so in any detail, however, let me say that it is difficult, as you will recognize, to represent on paper the facilities in personnel and equipment which are the background of our work. You could only get an adequate idea of these by paying us a visit, and if for any reason this should be convenient and if you are seriously interested, it would be advisable for you to see what we have.

Fundamentally this is a general medical research institute equipped to carry out practically any type of medical research. Actually, however, our work is confined largely to the systematic study of industrial intoxications. Among the long-time projects in which we are engaged are (1) the study of industrial lead exposure and absorption as a means of understanding industrial lead poisoning, (2) associated or somewhat less elaborate studies on industrial exposures to fluorides and to certain other heavy metals, such as mercury, (3) study of the toxicity of organic solvents from the viewpoint of brief heavy exposures, but more particularly from the aspect of prolonged exposure to low concentrations. In conjunction with these studies we carry out more or less elaborate physiological experiments which have to do with the fate of these materials in the animal organism as well as the manner and rate of their absorption. Thus in all our toxicologic studies we are concerned first with the physiologic evidences of morbid gross and microscopic changes. Because of the scope of this work we are equipped to deal with general chemical, biochemical, physiologic, hematologic, clinical microscopic and pathologic techniques. Our staff is made up of medical men some of whom are familiar with the clinical manifestations of industrial disease, of analytical chemists, organic chemists, biological chemists and pathologists. There is also a librarian, statistician, a draftsman and other technical personnel. Our staff numbers about 45.

The laboratory is an integral part of the College of Medicine of the University of Cincinnati, operating, therefore, under the administrative authority of the Dean of the College of Medicine and the other administrative authorities of the Univer-

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sity. Our work is not endowed, but has been entirely self-supporting. We undertake to investigate problems brought to us by industrial organizations (or during the war by governmental agencies). We will undertake any worthy project which can be handled adequately with our facilities and which is of a type that can be carried out under the policies of a University laboratory. That is to say, we assume the full responsibility for the conduct of the work, although, of course, we are ready and anxious to obtain all the technical advice we can from the industrial organization that brings us the problem. The scope of the work is determined in large part by the funds that can be made available for the purpose. Here we make an estimate of the probable cost of the conduct of the work along the lines agreed upon, with the understanding that any deficit is to be made up by the organization that brings us the problem and that any balance remaining after the completion of the job is to be refunded to the organization. Our estimates are usually fairly close to the mark, although occasionally experimental difficulties lead to greater expenditures than we have anticipated. We generally make the specific agreement that we shall not spend more than a certain sum without the full knowledge and consent of the sponsor of the work. By reason of progress reports together with periodic statements of the account we find it possible to avoid misunderstandings over financial matters. The cost of the operation of the Laboratory as a whole, including all overhead expense is allocated against the several projects under study during a particular period in accordance with orthodox accounting methods.

The results of our investigations are published from time to time in accordance with our own judgment of their merit and their practical usefulness to professional people. In this matter the University reserves all rights of publication. On the other hand, we exercise due professional care in relation to our public responsibility and we are very careful not to reveal trade secrets which are given to us in confidence.

In general we like to choose experimental projects that have some relation to our previous general experimental program. As a matter of the scientific interest of our staff this is important and it is not possible for us to take everything that comes our way. In general also we prefer rather long-term investigations to short ones, if for no other reason than that we do not like to have a shifting personnel. This is awkward in a University laboratory and it is also disadvantageous from the point of view of the continuity and quality of the work. Within these limits we have found it possible to do a great deal of work that is interesting to us and useful to industry. I trust that this will give you a reasonably clear idea of our work, but if I have omitted any matter of importance, do not hesitate to raise such questions.

Very truly yours,

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ARMOUR AND COMPANY

1355 WEST 31ST STREET

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

CHEMICAL DIVISION

October 2, 1945

Dr. Robert A. Kehoe,
Director
Kettering Laboratory of Applied Physiology
University of Cincinnati
Cincinnati 21, Ohio

Dear Sir:

We are interested in knowing more about the work which your organization is set up to do and the type of projects you undertake.

Our understanding at present is that your establishment tests industrial materials for toxicity and irritation.

If this is so, we would like to know whether your selection of problems is done on a fee basis or whether your organization is fully endowed and selects its problems on a basis of their interest to industry.

Yours very truly,

K. E. Johnson
ARMOUR CHEMICAL DIVISION

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