

ACADEMY OF MEDICINE - TALK - NOVEMBER 13, 1951

The Department of Preventive Medicine and Industrial Health of the College of Medicine, as now constituted, was formed in 1949 by the coalition of the Department of Preventive Medicine with the Kettering Laboratory, thus forming an institute within which undergraduate and graduate teaching, together with organized research, can be carried on in a systematic manner. The regular instruction of medical students is a responsibility of the Division of Preventive Medicine under the direction of Professor Phair. Some instruction in preventive medicine as it relates to industry is provided by the Divisions of Industrial Medicine and Industrial Hygiene. A three-year course of graduate instruction in industrial medicine, leading to the degree of Doctor of Industrial Medicine is conducted by the entire teaching staff of the Department, including that of the Division of Preventive Medicine, with the assistance of other departments in the Medical School, the Law School, the Engineering School and the School of Business Administration, under the authority of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of the University.

The research program of the Department has developed primarily over the years out of the problems and needs of industry, with extensions into the field of the public health. It deals with specific industrial problems such as the toxicology of metals, organic solvents, insecticides, plastics and other industrial chemicals, and also with coordinated chemical, physiological, clinical and epidemiological investigations. Investigations of this type now in progress relate to the physiology of the skin, the metabolism of lead and of fluorides by man, the hazard of occupational cancer

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in the petroleum industry, the significance of atmospheric pollution in various communities, and the pollution of streams by industrial wastes.

The consulting services of the Department in this and other communities have become an important part of its activities. These include special diagnostic services, rendered to physicians, hospitals and industrial organizations. In this connection a present effort on the part of representatives of the Children's Hospital and the General Hospital, combined with those of pediatricists in the city, the Department of Health of Cincinnati and this Department, to study the problem of lead poisoning in infants and children, is worthy of note. Other comparable activities have consisted from time to time in consulting services to the Ohio Industrial Commission, the City of Cincinnati, the towns of St. Bernard, Reading and others, with reference to specific problems of industrial or community health. A continuing relationship of this type is that of providing pathologic and toxicologic services for The Coroner of Hamilton County. A recent development concerns the clinical study of miners, primarily those disabled by cardio-respiratory disease, sponsored by the United Mine Workers Health and Welfare Fund. With this last activity the circle of functions concerned with occupational health and disease has been filled out so that professional training in the field may be carried out broadly and comprehensively in this medical center. In many respects the initiation of graduate training of physicians in the practice of industrial medicine, begun in 1947, has been the most significant development of the Department in the minds of its staff. It represents, in our feeling, a coming of age, so to speak, on the part of an activity that began in 1924 in an isolated research problem, and

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soon found itself growing lustily, Topsy-like, in the spreading fabric of modern industrial life, later to become oriented and firmly rooted in the urgent needs of an increasingly complex society.

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