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Whitehall, May 5, 1950.

The following Address was presented to The KING on the occasion of the opening by His Majesty of the new building of the National Institute for Medical Research at Mill Hill on Friday, the 5th May, 1950:—

May it please your Majesty:

The Medical Research Council, who act under the general direction of a Committee of Your Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, do humbly pray that Your Majesty will inaugurate this new building of their central establishment, the National Institute for Medical Research, situated here at Mill Hill in the Borough of Hendon in the County of Middlesex.

The work of the Medical Research Council includes the quest for new knowledge useful not only for the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease but also for the maintenance of normal health and full efficiency of body and mind. Within this field the function of the Council is twofold:— on the one hand, to bring the aid of the State to widening the field of knowledge by the expenditure of the money voted annually by Parliament for the purpose; and on the other hand, to bring the knowledge so gained to the assistance of the State by providing expert advice to Your Majesty's Government and by undertaking special investigations into practical problems of the day.

The Council promote research work partly by means of grants to independent investigators, and partly by maintaining a permanent scientific staff of their own. Members of this staff are widely scattered in Research Units attached to university departments, hospitals and other institutions, both at home and in the Colonies, wherever there are to be found the best opportunities for studying particular problems and of collaborating with other similarly engaged. It has, however, always been the Council's policy to house a substantial proportion of their staff in a central establishment devoted to research in all the laboratory branches of medical science. This central establishment, the National Institute for Medical Research, constitutes a key point in the Council's programme as a whole.

The original staff of the National Institute for Medical Research were brought together, in the year Nineteen Hundred and Twenty, in a former hospital building in Hampstead, but in the course of time it became clear that this building was inadequate for the expansion of work that was needed, especially in the subject of chemotherapy.

The construction of the present building, designed by Mr. Maxwell Ayrton, was begun in the year Nineteen Hundred and Thirty-Seven. Plans for rehousing the Institute were interrupted by war, and it was not till January of the present year that the removal of the staff and equipment of the Institute from Hampstead to Mill Hill was accomplished, and even then the constructional work was not in all respects complete.

The Institute includes divisions concerned with fundamental investigations into the properties and

functions of living organisms and tissues, and into the underlying physical and chemical processes, together with the development of special technical methods for the study of these phenomena. Other divisions are engaged in research on diseases due to infection, particularly with viruses, in the study of the mode of action of drugs, and in the search for new chemical compounds useful in the treatment of specific infections. Another is concerned with the assay and standardisation of medicinal substances of which the potency cannot be determined by direct chemical means; this division has responsibilities not only to the Council but to the Ministry of Health and to the World Health Organisation. All these divisions work together, collaborating with one another at points where their respective fields overlap. The Institute also contains a library well stocked with the past and current literature of medical science.

The Medical Research Council are now able to present to Your Majesty this National Institute for Medical Research in full working order, in new accommodation which provides adequate space for all its activities and with facilities designed to give scope for the use of the most modern methods of scientific investigation.

The project was originally approved by the Council while the Right Honourable the Lord Balfour of Burleigh was their Chairman, Sir Edward Mellanby was their Secretary, and Sir Henry Dale was Director of the Institute. It has been brought to completion during the period of office of their respective successors. This meeting hall has been named in memory of Sir Walter Fletcher, during whose term of office as the Council's first Secretary the site was purchased in the year Nineteen Hundred and Twenty-Two.

May it please Your Majesty to accept these loyal submissions on the part of the Medical Research Council, and graciously to inaugurate the building.

To which Address His Majesty was pleased to return the following gracious Answer:—

Lord Addison,

I am very pleased to come here today to open the new building of the National Institute for Medical Research. It marks yet one more advance in man's fight against disease and in his struggle to bring a healthier and fuller life to each of us.

The opening of this building is a great encouragement because it shows that, despite the serious setbacks of war, the search for new knowledge for the benefit of humanity persists, and by its enthusiasm surmounts all difficulties.

The Medical Research Council, in providing this centre, show that they are preparing for still greater efforts and progress in the future. This fine building, so admirably planned, provided with adequate and well-designed accommodation and equipped with the most modern apparatus of scientific investigation will greatly help the work of those whose devotion to the relief of suffering we all admire. And here they will be able to concentrate on their common task and enjoy that close association which is so productive of good results.