

Studying British Rehabilitation Methods

A BRITISH COUNCIL course on "Rehabilitation and Resettlement of the Disabled" opened in London on October 15th, attended by men and women professionally concerned with rehabilitation in Belgium, Norway, Sweden, Austria, Germany, Yugoslavia, Italy, Portugal, Israel and Malaya.

Among them were a party of eight W.H.O. Fellows from Yugoslavia. They will take up important positions in a new Rehabilitation and Training Centre which is to be established in Belgrade.

The programme was arranged in co-operation with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour and National Service, and the Ministry of Pensions. Course Director was Dr. Harold Balme, O.B.E., Adviser on Rehabilitation to the United Nations.

The party visited the Luton and Dunstable Hospital and the Vauxhall Motor Works, Luton (October 18th); an Employment Exchange in Stepney (October 19th); Farnham Park Recuperative Centre, Farnham Royal, Bucks (October 22nd); Cambridge and Papworth Village Settlement (October 23rd); Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Bucks (October 24th); Queen Mary's Hospital, Roehampton (October 25th); Belmont Hospital, Sutton (October 26th); and West Middlesex Hospital, Isleworth and St. Margaret's School, Croydon, Surrey (two separate parties on October 26th).

Visits farther afield were made to the Poliomyelitis Unit, Pinderfields Hospital, near Wakefield, Yorks (October 29th) and the Miners' Rehabilitation Centre, Firbeck Hill, near Worksop, Notts. (October 30th); the Birmingham Accident Hospital and Rehabilitation Centre (October 31st) and the Rehabilitation Shop and Health Department of Austin's Motor Works, Longbridge, Birmingham (November 1st); and the Industrial Rehabilitation Unit and the Government Training Centre, Leicester (November 2nd).

After their return to London on November 2nd, course members visited the Remploy Factory at Barking, Essex, and the National Institute for the Blind (November 5th) and Queen Elizabeth's Training College for the Disabled, Leatherhead, Surrey (November 6th). The course ends on November 7th.

Letters to the Editor.

Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not in ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

October 17th, 1951.

A Festival Fruit Tree.

To the Editor :
DEAR MADAM,

One of the pleasantest memories of this Festival year should be the planting of a fruit tree in the name of every baby born, and in the remembrance of any loved one who has passed on during 1951.

One can conceive of few things more interesting and permanent in educational value than for a child to grow up with a fruit tree, either an apple or a plum or a mulberry, named in memory of the child's birth.

All its life such a child would be grateful to his parents as year by year it gathered an annual harvest and praised God for the kindly fruits of the earth that are given to man for his food.

If anyone should not have a garden, they could have the tree planted in the garden of the Lady Margaret Fruitarian Hospital, to which there would be an annual pilgrimage and picnic.

JOSIAH OLDFIELD,

President of the Fruitarian Society,
Doddington, Kent.

Nation's Health in 1949

(Concluded from page 107)

Food Poisoning.

Corrected notifications totalled 6,111, a large increase due in part to two administrative measures which increased the proportion of outbreaks notified, while the increased use of the diagnostic help of the Public Health Laboratory Service has also increased the number of cases reported. "But besides any apparent increase, there has been during the past ten years a real and substantial increase, mainly due to three causes. The first of these is, the retention overnight and reheating of meat dishes cooked the day before they are to be eaten in consequence of the necessity for economy in using rationed meat supplies. The second, is the great increase in communal feeding in school, mine and factory canteens; in these the practice of cooking meat or gravy in large containers the day before they are to be eaten, is dangerous, for the large containers cool slowly and may for many hours maintain a temperature favourable to the rapid multiplication of organisms, which the reheating temperature is too low to kill. The third cause is, neglect of personal hygiene, often due to lack of facilities, rationing of supplies and shortage of staff, though in some outbreaks the standard of kitchen hygiene was high."

The most common infection is *salmonella typhimurium*. No outbreak was reported due to freshly cooked joints of fresh meat eaten hot but 195 to processed, made-up, or reheated meat. The Ministers of Health and Food have set up working parties to inquire into subjects such as catering establishments, meat products, and meat inspection, and three on "Manufactured Meat Products," "Hygiene in Catering Establishments," "Meat Inspection" respectively have reported.

Venereal Disease.

There was a steep fall in the clinic figures for early *syphilis*—the number of patients attending for the first time falling from 10,637 in 1948 to 6,812 in 1949—and to a lesser extent for *gonorrhoea*: this fall has actually gathered speed during the last three years, and the outlook for the future seems excellent.

Public Health Laboratory Service.

The widespread and varied work of the Public Health Laboratory Service which in 1949 had reached about three-quarters of its full growth is described.

The Air Hygiene Unit among other studies investigated the bacterial contamination of air in underground trains during the evening rush-hour. The results were surprising. The general plate counts never reached very high figures and were lower than those in elementary school classrooms and in some public offices. It seemed that most of the bacteria in the air of the car were liberated from the clothing of the occupants and from the upholstery; and that there was no massive accumulation of air-borne bacteria in tube trains even during the rush-hour, the rapidity with which the count fell suggested that there was little risk of any persistent contamination of the air with pathogenic bacteria. During the time these observations were carried out, there was very little coughing or sneezing in the car; the results might have been different if colds and coughs had been more frequent.

During a survey of the bacterial contamination of the air in boot and shoe factories, the average count was found to be higher in large workrooms than in small ones, even though the large workrooms were usually the more modern.

Food and kitchen hygiene, including washing-up with detergents—are among the many highly technical subjects dealt with. Q fever, whooping cough vaccination, new diphtheria prophylactics, gamma globulin, the cultivation of tubercle bacilli were among the special investigations. A third report on the grading of ice-cream confirmed the value of the methylene blue reduction test.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)