Food.—The methods of preservation of foods by canning, cold storage or dehydration, have all involved considerable chemical investigation. For example, in canning, the question of the possible corrosion of the container is of paramount importance. Sugar, which is an essential item of our diet, also offers much to scientific research, as witness the rise of the beet sugar industry in this country during the present century: refining procedures are based on chemical methods.

Water.—Whatever the system (of purification) chemistry enters largely into it.

Sewage.—In addition to the actual treatment, chemistry has done much more for this essential Public Health Service as, for example, in the development of safety lamps for the protection of men working in sewers... also in the metallurgical field in developing suitable... alloys for the machinery necessary for... treatment processes.

Medicine.—After outlining various anaesthetics and analgesics developed by chemists, Mr. Regan continued: “... It seems desirable to emphasize the remarkable changes effected, since about the end of the first world war, in therapeutic science where chemistry has been able to intervene in such a way as to enable medicine to deal effectively with the causes of disease and not merely with the symptoms.”...

Other points dealt with in the lecture were detergents, insecticides, rodenticides, and miscellaneous matters, such as artificial fabrics, fertilizers, the development of building materials, etc. “The list,” stated Mr. Regan, “might be extended almost indefinitely.”

He closed with a description of the work of a chemist in the public health service.

HEALTH SERVICES AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC THROUGH THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

BY

A. B. STEWART, M.D., Ch.B., D.P.H.

In considering the health services administered locally, it would be a mistake to think exclusively of those administered by the local health authorities, that is, the County Councils and the County Borough Councils. Although these local health services are the main subject to be dealt with, it should not be forgotten that all health services are under local control to a considerable extent...

In achieving our present service we have, by typical compromise and with due regard for tradition, placed it under national control, and at the same time kept local interest alive and responsible for the detailed arrangements in all branches of the service.

It is convenient to regard our health services as being made up of three main branches, the general practitioners and allied services; the hospital and specialist services; and the local health authority services.
On the appointed day the local health authorities surrendered control of the municipal hospitals to the Regional Boards, and assumed responsibility for certain duties contained in the National Health Services Act. These may be enumerated briefly here: The Care of Mothers and Young Children; Midwifery Service; Health Visiting; Home Nursing; Provision of Illness-Care and After-care; Domestic Help Scheme; Mental Health Service; Ambulance Service; and in addition, Local Authorities carried on a School Health Service.

My own experience of this work is limited to London, and naturally the remarks made will refer, in the main, to the service as it exists in London.

Among the points made by Dr. Stewart are:

The antenatal, postnatal, and child welfare clinics, transferred to the County Council, have been maintained, and the necessary steps taken for expansion where this is required.

The midwifery service—so far as it concerns confinements in the home—is the concern of the local health authority, and the County Council, either through its own midwives, or by arrangement with other organizations—provides a choice of midwives to all expectant mothers.

The greatly enlarged scope of the work of the health visitor. Not only does the health visitor attend mothers and babies, but she may be called upon to report on matters concerning housing, and other social problems; and a new and closer link with the workers in the hospitals has been established.

CORRECTIONS

The following corrections should be made in letters and articles by Colonel F. M. Richardson in previous numbers of the Journal.

Letter April 1950—p. 214, line 13. For F.D.S.s read "F.D.L.s. (Forward Defended Localities)."

1949 (Nov.).

P. 225, 4th line from bottom. For “slightly” read “slightlying.”


P. 245, 7th line from bottom. For “adaption” read “adaptation.”

1950 (Jan.).

P. 33, line 26. For “amphibians” read “D.U.K.W.s.”

P. 36, lines 30 and 31. From words “A Dance” first line to read “Advance. Can you send us reinforcements.”