

FORMATION OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE CANCER CAMPAIGN.

In 1923 the total number of deaths from Cancer according to the Registrar General's return for England and Wales had reached over 50,000 and at that time there were probably in addition over 150,000 sufferers from Cancer in England and Wales.

At that time there were a number of important bodies carrying out Cancer Research, amongst others - The Imperial Cancer Research Fund, The Cancer Laboratories of the Middlesex Hospital, London, The Cancer Research Institute associated with the Cancer Hospital, Fulham Road, London, The Cancer Laboratories of the Christie Hospital, Manchester, The Cancer Research Department of the Marischal College, Aberdeen and a considerable number of smaller active departments associated with the Pathological Departments of the principal General Hospitals in London and the Provincial Centres of England. There was no Organisation in existence at this time to bring together the Cancer Research workers and co-ordination of effort, moreover, the position of any Scientific workers desiring to carry out independent investigations was very difficult being hampered by lack of funds and skilled advice.

The Founders of this Campaign realised that such a state of affairs was detrimental to the progress of the Cancer problem, and it was decided to inaugurate a Movement which would have for its aims and objects the co-ordination of Cancer Research within the British Empire and the securing of financial assistance for such work.

In the early part of 1923 preliminary steps were taken to promote the contemplated Movement. A series of Meetings were convened including a Conference of Representatives of the Royal Society, Medical Research Council, The Ministry of Health and Representatives of the above referred to Cancer Research Centres. After long negotiations a scheme was evolved which met with the approval of all parties, the result being the formation of The British Empire Cancer Campaign registered as a corporate body and the formation of the Governing Council, known as the Grand Council. A scheme of representation of existing Cancer Research Centres was arranged on the Grand Council. Subsequently the Grand Council formed various expert working Committees of the Campaign. The fundamental objects of the Campaign can be summarised as follows:-

- (1) To give financial support to existing Cancer Research Centres.
- (2) To assist private individual Research Workers both financially and providing accommodation at the laboratories subsidised by the Campaign.
- (3) To encourage the formation of new Research Centres.
- (4) To co-ordinate Research throughout the World through the "Cancer Review" of Abstracts.
- (5) General propaganda among the public with the object of inducing patients to report to their medical advisors whilst Cancer is operable thus reducing the mortality.

Since its inception the Campaign in addition to its general activities has brought about the International Conference on Cancer in 1928, one of the ultimate results of which was the foundation of the National Radium Fund and the formation of Branches of the Campaign in the principal Counties of England and the British Dominions each with their own Research Centre. It has established The "Cancer Review" now the most important Journal of Cancer Abstracts in the World for the assistance of Research workers.

In pursuance of its original policy, the Campaign has also been instrumental in establishing many new Research Centres at Home and in the British Dominions, has made direct grants of over £140,000 for Cancer Research and, in addition, a sum of £275,000 has become available for Cancer Research through the funds collected by its Branches.