

The atom's expanding role in medicine*

I would like to take this opportunity to tell you something of the work in the nuclear field related to medicine and to health in general. This is an area of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy that, even though it affects the lives of many millions of people in this country and throughout the world, is not as well known and appreciated as it should be.

To put my story in perspective, let me begin with some brief historical background. Generally speaking, radiation has been a valuable tool of medicine for quite some time. When the Rev. Hugh A. Cooper started the Southwestern Presbyterian Sanatorium, the forerunner of your hospital center, here in Albuquerque in October of 1908, the X ray had already become an important and internationally used tool of medical diagnosis even though it had been discovered by Roentgen only in December of 1895. In fact, it is somewhat amazing that within two years of that discovery crude but effective X-ray equipment was being used very successfully by the military to diagnose battle injuries. During the Tirah Campaign, the 1897 tribal uprising in India that closed off the Khyber Pass to the British, X-ray apparatus was carried on the backs of native bearers and pack animals over some of the worst terrain in the world. Quickly unpacked and used whenever necessary, it proved invaluable in locating bullets and splinters of lead, as well as in determining the extent of injury to the bone. In that campaign three fragile X-ray tubes were used in more than 200 cases, and, in spite of their rough transport, were brought home in perfect working condition.

About the same time similar equipment was being used on the sunbaked shores of the Nile where Lord Kitchener was trying to subdue the savage Dervish tribesmen—with the help of a young cavalry officer

**Remarks upon receiving the Presbyterian Hospital Center Foundation Award at the Founders' Day Dinner, Presbyterian Hospital Center Foundation, Albuquerque, N. M., Oct. 13, 1969.*