AIDING SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

A new country such as Australia is essentially a country for experiment and innovation. Novel conditions demand novel methods, and that necessitates stimulating the original and inventive faculties of its people. Australians have not been backward in adjusting their methods to their environment, or in initiating fresh processes where the situation has required it. The novel circumstances utilized and the initiative of the expatriate is an excellent case in point, and is, moreover, only one instance in a single branch of enterprise. Many other creative powers and progressive geniuses of the people; but much more if we are to be accomplished in this direction if adequate facilities for encouraging and rewarding original research had been available. Lack of assistance has probably frustrated the hopes of many a struggling investigator, and with them from the country the fruits of their talents.

Dr. T. Brailsford Robertson, M.D., son-in-law of Professor Stirling, C.M.G., who, eight years ago took the B.Sc. degree at the Adelaide University, and has since gained in the United States the higher degrees of Ph.D. and D.Sc., has passed for a half-year to South Australia. Dr. Robertson is now an Associate Professor of Physiology at the University of California. At that institution he is assistant to a famous biological investigator, Professor Loeb, and he has also, in collaboration with Dr. T. C. Burnett, at the same university, made researches into the causes and nature of carcinoma and cancerous growths that give promise of having an important bearing on the question of the discovery of a cure for cancer. His work is hopeful that before long patient inquiries may result in something being found that will obviate the malignant trouble without the use of the knife—which he is careful to mention—suffering is yet in the one step to be relied on, if taken in the early stages of the disease.

Dr. Robertson and Dr. Waechter of Munich, each working on separate lines, noted that a certain subcutaneous condition is usually abundant in the tissues of cancer patients, and the present investigation is largely on the lines of establishing whether this, or any other agent, is the cause of the disease, and whether, if it is, its action in that connection can be utilized to the benefit of the natural and of humanity.

Dr. and Mrs. Robertson will remain in Australia. They will undertake a tour of the world during their duties at the end of his year's furlough.