SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT

PUBLICATIONS OF THE U. S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

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U. S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

A great majority of the members of the Washington Academy and its affiliated societies are engaged in research in governmental laboratories. They are the authors of the papers in which by far the larger part of governmental research is described. Although the preparation of these papers is in itself a certain satisfaction, since they are the evidence of worthwhile accomplishments, the real purpose of their publication is to aid others engaged in the advancement of science. This, however, is possible only if the papers find their way to persons engaged in research of a similar kind. This link in the chain of scientific progress is usually given very little attention. Most of us consider that our duty is done when our papers are accepted for publication. We assume that it is the concern of others to obtain them and not ours to render this task less difficult.

The channels through which papers describing additions to scientific knowledge are most widely distributed are the well-known, regularly appearing, and internationally circulating journals, especially those devoted to specific fields of research. In general, our governmental publications meet these specifications to an exceedingly limited degree. They are usually published irregularly, are of a heterogeneous character, and but a very small proportion of any of them ever get beyond the borders of our country. Descriptions of experimental investigations published in them can thus rarely reach workers in other countries who would be able to use them to advantage.

Editor's Summary

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