

BOOKS

not developed owing to the lack of trained librarians. As far as post-graduate education is concerned, a number of countries have well-planned facilities, but in the majority there is no overall plan.

Looking back over the fifteen years since the Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean came into being, Dr A. H. Taba, the Regional Director, points out that in the 1964 budget for the Region three times as much was set aside for the training of medical and paramedical personnel as in the 1961 budget. Out of a total of 580 projects sponsored by the Regional Office, 220 have had education and training as their chief objective. In the Region the number of medical schools has risen from 12 in 1949 to 33 in 1964, and in the past five years medical manpower has been increased by 50 %-100 %.

However, despite a greater effort to remedy the acute shortage of doctors, the challenge is far from being met and medical manpower is still critically insufficient over wide areas. The population/doctor ratio ranges from 1000 to 10 000 inhabitants per physician in countries which contain two-thirds of the Region's population, and it rises to well above 50 000 people per doctor in others.

Dr I. C. Fang, Director of the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific, states that the shortage of trained and qualified staff to organize, administer, and man national health services continues to be one of the main problems facing health administrators and has in many instances impeded the further progress of health programmes in the Region. It is ascribed mainly to the lack of primary and secondary school graduates from whom to recruit trainees, of health training facilities, and of teaching staff.

There are 79 medical schools in the Region graduating fully qualified doctors, and four schools producing assistant medical officers. Recruitment of faculty staff is difficult, especially for the basic sciences, and in some countries of the Region the lack of local postgraduate training facilities forces graduates to seek training abroad. The physician/population ratio varies markedly between countries—there is one doctor for 900 people in Australia and Japan, for instance, but in Cambodia only one for 40 000. Doctors, too, are unevenly distributed within countries, where they are concentrated in the urban areas.

World Health.—*World Health Organization, Geneva, March 1965.*

International co-operation in health began in the last century under pressure from dread diseases that were causing suffering and death all over the world. It is fitting, therefore, that in International Co-operation Year, 1965, World Health Day should be devoted to one of those diseases—smallpox.

On this day, I wish to pay tribute to health officers the world over whose constant vigilance limits the spread of smallpox nationally and internationally, and to the health teams who, in all parts of the world, often working in the most difficult conditions, are building up protection against the disease through mass vaccination.

Over 160 years ago, vaccination was first shown to prevent the disease ; but we have failed to make full use of this weapon. It is outrageous that in one year there should still be over 100,000 cases of smallpox and 25,000 deaths from this disease. It is equally outrageous that the world as a whole should still be constantly threatened by it.

The World Health Organization in 1958 began a campaign for the eradication of smallpox from the world and I am confident that eradication can and will be achieved. Yet victory will not be attained without generous assistance from the countries free of smallpox, nor without much hard work in the countries where smallpox is still endemic.

The complete eradication of smallpox would not only rid the world of a disease which at present is a constant menace but would also provide an example of what true international co-operation can achieve in a well-defined and limited sphere. In the meantime, however, a constant alert against smallpox will have to be maintained throughout the world.—*Dr M. G. Candau, Director-General of the World Health Organization.*
