

News, Notes and Queries

of these will be a new Illustrations Department to which writers, lecturers and others may apply for appropriate illustrations for books and papers or for slides.

In addition to these new permanent sections for the Museum, adequate space has also been allocated for temporary Special Exhibitions in which individual topics of particular medical or scientific importance will be treated.

A few special collections which reflected the personal interests of the late Sir Henry Wellcome and have little or no relevance to the history of medicine and the allied sciences are being offered as permanent 'Wellcome Collections' to institutions with scholars trained in the fields of study to which they belong. Details of their new location will be announced when the transfer has been completed.

AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCE ADOLPH BASSER LIBRARY

A CENTRE for the study of the history of science in this country has been created in the Basser Library of the Australian Academy of Science in Canberra.

Its purpose is twofold: firstly to build up a specialist library of published material relating to the history of Australian science, including Australian scientific publications; and secondly to collect and preserve archival material (or to record the whereabouts of such material) that throws light on the lives and work of Australian scientists and their institutions.

There is increasing recognition in Australia and elsewhere that the genesis of discoveries and the growth of ideas in science, and their influence on a country's development, cannot be understood solely from formal publications. We need, rather, to turn to the informal documentary evidence and to examine such things as draft manuscripts, laboratory daybooks and fieldbooks, notes of experiments, personal diaries, letters, photographs, autobiographical notes and memoirs, and the minutes and unpublished reports of scientific bodies.

The Academy wishes to draw attention to the importance of such archival material and to secure that it may be preserved and made available to scholars. For this purpose we offer to house such material in our specialist and national archive and to promote the study of the lives of Australian scientists and scientific institutions. The Library also maintains an Australia-wide catalogue of scientific manuscripts preserved by other libraries and institutions together with a biographical card index of Australian scientists from the early settlements to the present day. The Academy invites the help of anyone able to give it in tracing such archival material.