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SVEN HULTBERG

in

Memoriam

Professor Sven Hultberg of Karolinska Sjukhuset, and Director of Radiumhemmet, died of coronary thrombosis on April 24, 1965, at the age of 57. He received his medical education at Lund University and graduated in 1943 with a thesis on short-range radiation in the treatment of superficial skin and lip cancer. In the same year, he was appointed assistant professor at Radiumhemmet where for seven years he worked directly under Professor Elis Berven. When Hugo Ahlbom, who succeeded Elis Berven in 1950, died after only a few years, Sven Hultberg, in 1953, was elected director of Radiumhemmet. Sven Hultberg took up his post at a time when great changes were taking place in the treatment of malignant tumors and when new methods involving the use of radioisotopes, hormones, and cytostatics, as well as high-energy radiation from cobalt 60 betatrons and linear accelerators, were being introduced. Under Hultberg's energetic and far-seeing leadership, these new methods were also introduced at Radiumhemmet and new sections were opened at the hospital. It was soon found that cobalt 60 was superior to radium in many respects, and as Hultberg did not consider the cobalt apparatus then in use to meet his requirements for adequate radiation, the gammatron was designed and constructed as a result of collaboration between Hultberg and a German firm. The experiences gained with this new unit, and the measurement results obtained during its development, were

described by Hultberg and his co-workers at the International Congress of Radiology at Munich in 1958. The equipment at Radiumhemmet was also supplemented with a kilocurie cobalt unit and a 18 MeV betatron.

During the last few years of his life Hultberg was working on a project to acquire a high-voltage station and a new radiobiology department which were to be housed in an annex to Radiumhemmet, but he did not live to see the new departments from which he expected so much. The new hematologic and cytologic laboratories at Radiumhemmet were largely a result of Sven Hultberg's interest in cytostatic drug treatment and in the increasing importance attached to cytologic diagnosis.

Sven Hultberg was an excellent teacher and lecturer. The large textbook on radiation therapy and cancer disease for the Scandinavian countries, published in 1963, was in a large measure the result of his efforts. Hultberg was above all a clinician, however. His own experience of illness and its effects on the personality may have helped him to a deeper understanding of his patients' difficulties and contributed to their great confidence in him.

Sven Hultberg was engaged in much organisatory work connected with his profession. He was chairman of the Swedish Society of Medical Radiology from 1962—1964. He was the initiator of the Nordic Radiotherapy Society, and its chairman from 1954 to 1964. From 1954 until his death he was Associate Editor and a Member of the Editorial Board of *Acta Radiologica*. His work in the special field he represented and his interest in the activities of the journal were enthusiastic and greatly stimulating. His opinions on manuscripts offered for publication were always valuable and greatly appreciated both by the authors themselves and by the journal. Sven Hultberg will be sadly missed by the Editorial Board of *Acta Radiologica*.

The Editor