CHEMICAL IDEAS IN MEDICINE AND BIOLOGY

By Sir Henry Dale

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This is the second occasion within a period of some eighteen months on which I have been given the pleasant opportunity of taking part in the opening of new research laboratories in this country, supported by your great pharmaceutical industries. I hope I may detect, in this second invitation to take part in a ceremony of this kind, a willingness to regard me still as one of the workers in medical science who have found opportunity for research in laboratories supported by industry, although my work under such conditions came to an end all too many years ago. I shall never regret that experience, or cease to be grateful for the opportunity which it gave me. As I suggested when I spoke last year at Rahway, the immediate objective of research in such laboratories, and the kind of opportunity which it affords, may have their natural and proper differences from those of the laboratories supported by academic or public endowment. But the differences in result for the progress of medical science are often more formal than real; and it is my hope that the growth of cooperation between those working in these different spheres may yet bring to many the rather rare privilege which has fallen to my own lot of migrating from one to the other, and back again, and thus of knowing at first hand the best that each can offer.

We are opening to-day new research laboratories in connection with a modern pharmaceutical industry. To those of us who can look back over the period which has elapsed since my own student days, the change that has taken place in the scope of pharmacy has a revolutionary aspect. Forty years ago the earliest of the antitoxic sera ranked as recent discoveries, and accurate methods for measuring their activities in tests on animals had just been laid down by Ehrlich, on principles which provided the founda-

1 Address given at the opening ceremony of the Eli Lilly Research Laboratories, October 11, 1934.