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THE SPIRIT OF THE LABORATORY¹

By Professor CHARLES R. STOCKARD

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WHY do we build a laboratory for physiological research? Because there have lived men like Theobald Smith. The discoveries and scientific advances made by such men have continually necessitated the building of new laboratories with more and more refined facilities in which other investigators might work to further widen the horizons of knowledge. Naming this the Theobald Smith Laboratory is dedicating it to one of the persons who greatly aided in its building. The Albany Medical College is to be congratulated on the realization of this fact, as well as on its peculiar right to adorn the building with such a name! Theobald Smith was a native son of this city, and the most distinguished graduate of the Albany Medical College. And it should be added, he

¹ Address given at the dedication of the Theobald Smith Memorial Laboratory at Albany Medical College on March 19, 1937.

probably was the most eminent contributor to medical science that this country has produced.

We may venture the fanciful conjecture that the earliest laboratory for physiological research was the Garden of Eden. Wherever this was, the story suggests that Adam tried out the effects of different plants as food for the human body and mind. These early instinctive experiments are still being performed by almost all members of the animal kingdom. But of all the animals, only Adam, with the valuable assistance of Eve, finally discovered the tree of knowledge and ate of its fruit. This food nourished the mind of Adam to develop beyond that of other animals, and he was driven out of the Garden and became capable of earning his bread by the sweat of his brow. The descendants of Adam ever since have been searching for this lost tree of knowledge, and though they have failed to find it they have learned much from the

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