ANIMAL EXPERIMENTATION IN BIOLOGY AND MEDICINE

By Professor A. J. CARLSON
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

The contributions of experiments on animals to present-day biological and medical knowledge and medical practice is so conspicuous and well known to our profession that my discussion would be out of place in this gathering except for the fact that in a democracy like ours the science and the service of biology and medicine must rest on the broad base of general approval of society and can not be many leagues ahead of the understanding of the average layman. The fact is that there is in our nation still a small body of apparently sane men and women, so poorly informed that they deny the value of animal experimentation for human health and human understanding, men and women so misled that they would, if they could, stop by law the humane use of animals by us in our perpetual labor towards understanding and controlling life and death processes. This is a stern reminder that we should forget that part of the oath of Hippocrates enjoining us to secrecy, that we must ever pass on what we have discovered to all our fellow citizens. This teaching must be done with patience, in true humility and without rancor, as the people in the mart and on the ranch have not traveled our path, hence can not possibly see eye to eye with us, without fair discussion. We, who have had the privilege to delve deepest into the nature of life and the control of disease, would be poor soldiers indeed, did we not strive to shield our fellow men from the consequences of their honest but misguided emotions. The misguided opponents of modern medical re-