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<i>Remarks on Professions in Medicine:</i> DR. ALFRED E. COHN	65	<i>Special Articles:</i>	
<i>Scientific Events:</i>		<i>The Susceptibility of Chicks to Diphtheria Bacilli and Toxin:</i> DR. MARTIN FROBISHER, JR. <i>The Anti-Tryptic Properties of Heparin:</i> DR. M. K. HORWITT. <i>Glycine—An Essential Factor for the Growth of Bacteriophage:</i> DR. EMORY L. ELLIS and JOHN SPIZIZEN	88
<i>The Printing Press of Leonardo da Vinci; Laboratory of the Commission on the Standardization of Biological Stains; Meeting of the Pan-American Congress of Ophthalmology at Cleveland; Conference on Applied Nuclear Physics; Retiring Members of the Faculty of the Ohio State University; Recent Deaths</i>	72	<i>Scientific Apparatus and Laboratory Methods:</i>	
<i>Scientific Notes and News</i>	75	<i>Glass Tubes for Rearing Phlebotomus and Other Insects:</i> DR. MARSHALL HERTIG. <i>The Administration of Drugs to Rats:</i> DOROTHY NELSON. <i>Keep Bottle-Tops free from Dust:</i> DR. H. F. PIERCE	91
<i>Discussion:</i>		<i>Science News</i>	6
<i>The Nature of the Intermolecular Forces Operative in Biological Processes:</i> PROFESSOR LINUS PAULING and MAX DELBRÜCK. <i>A New Calculation of the C=C Bond Strength and of Certain Resonance Energies:</i> DR. DOROTHY WRINCH. <i>Avoiding Obvious Residue from Nicotine-Bentonite Sprays:</i> PROFESSOR C. G. VINSON and S. A. MCCROBY. <i>Some Results of Colchicine Injections:</i> EDNA HIGBEE	77		
<i>Scientific Books:</i>			
<i>Aviation Medicine:</i> PROFESSOR YANDELL HENDERSON	80		
<i>Societies and Meetings:</i>			
<i>The Academy Conference:</i> DR. S. W. BILSING	82		
<i>Reports:</i>			
<i>Grants for Research of the Geological Society of America</i>	85		

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REMARKS ON PROFESSIONS IN MEDICINE¹

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THIS invitation of yours to speak here to-night I regard as no ordinary honor. Once before you offered me this same opportunity. Ten years ago seems so far behind us as to have occurred almost in another life time. Some of you must remember that through a long hour you were patient. And now you ask me again. You give me the chance of feeling a deep satisfaction in the belief that I was tried and was not found wanting. We both take a great risk. I take mine willingly. For there are things as to which I believe I shall feel the better for having shared my thoughts. Nor can I think of men and women with whom I prefer to share them better than with you. We have, as it were, through long personal friendships, established common points of view which, on

such occasions as this, come to some sort of systematic expression.

But I can not begin without recalling that I was brought here originally by Jack Wyckoff, whom I have always cherished as one of the most gifted of my friends. His gifts were not the gifts of tinsel—he did not shine by any of the arts that compel the immediate and spontaneous admiration of other men. Quite otherwise. His virtues came to be impressed upon us by their sheer weight—massive things which, because they were exercised in right directions, came to be understood to be expressions of deep intelligence and actuated by profound human sympathy. Wyckoff understood, I think, that the profession of medicine is so inextricably embedded in the social forces of our, indeed of any, time that it is a distortion of the facts to think of its position as something isolated. To

¹ Read before the Alpha Omega Alpha (Honorary Fraternity), Delta Chapter of New York, January 24, 1940.