The Metamorphosis of Drug Research: Dr. Theodore G. Klumpp

Aspects of Modern Psychology: Dr. Charles S. Myers

Obituary:

Eugene Davenport: Dr. David Kinley. Recent Deaths

Scientific Events:

America and British Science; The Institute of Technology of Northwestern University; Grants of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis; Survey of Industrial Research

Scientific Notes and News

Discussion:

The High Wax Content of Green Lint Cotton: Dr. Carl M. Conrad. Poliomyelitis in a Laboratory Worker Exposed to the Virus: Dr. A. B. Sabin and Robert Ward. Anopheles (Kerteszia) bellator D. & K., Found Naturally Infected with Plasmodium: Dr. L. E. Rosboom, Dr. L. A. Fox and R. L. Laird. The Place of Microfilm Copying in Library Organization: Dr. Atherton Seidell

Scientific Books:

Electroencephalography: Dr. Hallowell Davis. Psychology: Professor R. S. Woodworth

Special Articles:

Chimpanzee Handedness: Dr. Glen Finch. Change from Self-Incompatibility to Self-Compatibility Accompanying Change from Diploidy to Tetraploidy: Dr. A. B. Stout and Clyde Chandler. The Photochemical Spectrum of Cytochrome Oxidase in Heart Muscle: Dr. Joseph L. Melnick

Scientific Apparatus and Laboratory Methods:

The Examination of Contaminated Waters: Harold Leon Frutman. Permanent Mounts of Virus-infected Chorioallantoic Membranes: Dr. Wolcott B. Dunham

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THE METAMORPHOSIS OF DRUG RESEARCH

By Dr. Theodore G. Klumpp

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The topic which has been assigned to me for discussion is a broad one, and I am going to consider it from its broadest aspects. It is only a small exaggeration to say that any one who takes as much as an aspirin tablet for himself engages in drug research. I can speak then as one of 130,000,000 drug researchers in this country, but even at that I can only speak with the deepest humility. A short time ago our colored maid developed a cold and with it a cough. I was called upon to do something about it, and I gave her what I considered to be the best medicines available for a cough due to a cold. But the maid had more faith in a medicine of her own selection which I noticed she took to the exclusion of mine. Her faith in her medicine was its own reward and in due course of time her cough fortunately disappeared. I would have exposed myself to polite but silent scorn if I had tried to tell her that neither my prescription nor hers cured the cough—that it would have disappeared anyway, or, as some one put it, "Nature cures the disease while the remedy amuses the patient.” I might have tried to show her that man has been subject to colds and coughs since the dawn of civilization and that they have come and disappeared for countless generations before her medicine or mine had been discovered. But it would have been useless. If colds and their coughs hadn't made a habit of coming and going in precisely the same way regardless of what we did for them, man would long since have coughed himself off the face of the earth.

The element of faith has for centuries been one of the most important active ingredients in every medi-
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