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THE FUNCTIONS OF A UNIVERSITY LABORATORY¹

ON an occasion like the present, when we are gathered to congratulate this university upon the addition which it has just made to the existing equipment of the world for the prosecution of scientific studies, it seems appropriate, and it may not be entirely superfluous, to spend a little time in inquiry what it is that scientific laboratories have done for mankind during their comparatively brief past; to ask also how we may make them still more serviceable in the years which are to come.

It is not so very many years ago that a speaker upon this subject might have deemed it necessary to prove to his hearers (if he could) that laboratories were of service to the public and that they ought to be established and maintained. I am very glad that this is no longer necessary; that I may assume with confidence your acquiescence in the belief that scientific studies have been justified by their results. And I am very glad also that these results, great as they are, have, as yet, nothing like finality about them. To say that the natural sciences are still very imperfect and capable of vast improvements is only another way of saying that they are alive. Those of us who are devoted to their service have especial reason for joy in the fact that there is still so much to be done that we see no prospect of this service becoming unnecessary in our time or in that of our successors for many generations.

When one speaks of the beneficial results

¹ Address on the occasion of the opening of the Carnegie Science Building at Acadia University, Wolfville, N. S., October 21, 1909.

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