

SCIENCE

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WILLIAM HENRY WELCH¹

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

CONTENTS

William Henry Welch: DR. SIMON FLEXNER. 417

The Structures of the Hydrogen Molecule and the Hydrogen Ion: DR. IRVING LANGMUIR. 433

Scientific Events:—

The American Society of Mechanical Engineers; The American Ornithologists' Union; The American Society of Naturalists; The Association of American Geographers; The Department of Chemistry of the Ohio State University; Dedication of the Edward Orton Memorial Library 437

Scientific Notes and News 439

University and Educational News 441

Discussion and Correspondence:—

Visible Sound Waves: PROFESSOR FREDERICK A. SAUNDERS. *Drift Bottles as indicating a Superficial Circulation in the Gulf of Maine*: PROFESSOR JAMES W. MAJOR.... 442

Scientific Books:—

Bouvier's La Vie Psychique des Insectes: PROFESSOR W. M. WHEELER 443

Special Articles:—

On the Protein Content of Wheat: DR. W. F. GERICKE. *The Vitamine Requirements of the Rat on Diets rich in Protein, Carbohydrate and Fat*: CASIMIR FUNK AND HARRY E. DUBIN 446

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ON this memorable and beautiful occasion I have the cherished honor of having been chosen to perform, as it were, the duties of chronicler, in order that we may all be led to review in our minds the successive steps by which our great leader and master rose to such high distinction and wrought the miracle of giving to medicine a new birth in this country; and in order, also, that our successors, lighting their lamps at the shrine of Pathology and studying the treasures which these precious volumes enclose, may catch a gleam of what manner of man he was who produced them, and by the vigor of his living example and the charm of a rare personality, as well as by the power of his spoken and written word, in the short span of a lifetime raised medicine in the United States from a beneficent art to an expanding science.

William Henry Welch was born in Norfolk, Connecticut, April 8, 1850. He was the son of William and Emeline (Collin) Welch. His father was a practising physician, as were four of his father's brothers. Moreover, a great grandfather and grandfather were also physicians. When about one year of age, William Henry's mother died; thereafter he was

¹ An introduction to the collected papers and addresses of Dr. Welch, compiled in his honor on the occasion of his seventieth birthday, to be published in three volumes by the Johns Hopkins Press under the editorial supervision of a committee consisting of John J. Abel, Lewellys F. Barker, Frank Billings, Walter C. Burket, William T. Councilman, Harvey Cushing, John M. T. Finney, Simon Flexner, William S. Halsted, William H. Howell, John Howland, Henry M. Hurd, Henry Barton Jacobs, William W. Keen, Howard A. Kelly, William G. MacCallum, William J. Mayo, Ralph B. Seem, Winford H. Smith, William S. Thayer, J. Whitridge Williams, Hugh H. Young.