

## OBITUARY

## GEORGE PETER DREYER

GEORGE P. DREYER was born in Baltimore, September 22, 1866, and until 1900 his life was spent in that city. He was educated in Baltimore City College and in the Johns Hopkins University. Following his A.B. degree from Hopkins in 1887, he was fellow in physiology during '88 and '89 under the distinguished physiologist, Newell Martin, and received his Ph.D. degree in 1890.

Dr. Dreyer's early intention was to study medicine, but his contacts at Hopkins with Martin, and later with Howell, definitely brought him to decide on physiology as a career; a decision which he never regretted. He valued highly the acquaintances made in those earlier days. Such men as Henry Sewall, E. G. Conklin, T. H. Morgan, A. C. Abbott, C. W. Greene, Percy Dawson, Joseph Erlanger and David Lingle left pleasant and lasting memories.

From 1890 until 1900 he was associate professor at his Alma Mater, and during this time he became the master of physiological technique and manipulation for which he was justly famous. No one ever saw Professor Dreyer operate without admiring his skill. As a teacher he was as successful as he was technically skillful. His demonstrations were uniformly successful, and accomplished with a facility which often hid the actual difficulties. His first humiliation occurred when he had to use spectacles to catheterize Wharton's duct. While he accepted this premonition of approaching age philosophically, he frequently spoke of it.

In 1900 Dr. Dreyer came to Chicago as professor of physiology and physiological chemistry in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, which had formed an affiliation with the University of Illinois. The conditions were far from ideal and far from what he had anticipated. The affiliation proved to be loose and was soon broken, and for a time, the College of Physicians resumed its proprietary status. During the interim Dr. Dreyer remained, hoping for a reunion which would bring university standards, conditions and ideals. Satisfactory conditions, however, were not established until about 1915, and to make these conditions operative Dr. Dreyer assumed the office of dean. In this office he developed university working conditions and ideals for others, but at the cost of his health and with the sacrifice of research for many years. While acting as dean, he suffered an attack of pneumonia, followed by empyema, which left him physically incapacitated for more than a year. While he was afterwards mentally alert and able to resume professional duties, he had not the physical stamina demanded for research. Until the time of his death on February 27, he was compelled

to avoid unnecessary exertion and to adopt measures to retain and to promote health.

As a health-promoting measure, as well as from actual pleasure, he spent much of his leisure time in gardening, and the flower garden of his suburban home was the rendezvous of amateurs and friends.

Dr. Dreyer was a pioneer physiologist in Chicago; when he came many men on the Atlantic seaboard could visualize only vulgarity and incivility west of the Alleghenies. So far as physiology was concerned this was "pragmatically" true. Only Jacques Loeb, at Chicago, and Winfield Scott Hall, at Northwestern, had preceded him. A. P. Mathews, David J. Lingle, George Neil Stewart, C. C. Guthrie and Alexis Carrel soon followed. All these men bore the burden and worked in the heat of the day, but none of them were exposed to the disruptive ultra-violet rays as was Dreyer. An ancient prophet said that old men dream dreams, and the young men see visions. Dreyer was young and had vision, and Chicago to-day is physiologically what he hoped it would be. His only regret was that he was unable to contribute more to his chosen profession. His best known research was the discovery of secretory nerves to the adrenal glands, and his work on blood proteins and differential respiration. In 1899, by using large quantities of the adrenal venous blood, he was able to give the first convincing proof that the blood pressure raising principle is actually secreted into the blood flowing from the gland. His findings were afterwards fully confirmed by other workers. More important than his discoveries were his generous aid to others, and the preparation of the field for others to reap where he sowed.

Within the past two years, he devoted much time to planning a new laboratory in which he hoped to again resume research work. He lived to see this laboratory almost ready for occupancy, but after thirty years in the wilderness of promise he was allowed to see but not to enter, the promised land.

During his thirty years' service to the University of Illinois, Professor Dreyer came in contact with thousands of students and graduates. He was known to them as a great teacher, a profound student, a gentleman and a friend.

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## RECENT DEATHS

DR. L. H. PAMMEL, professor of botany since 1889 at the Iowa State College, died on March 23, while returning from a winter in California. Dr. Pammel was in his sixty-ninth year.