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SCIENCE IN MEDICAL EDUCATION¹

By Dr. FREDERICK P. GAY

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It is not often, I imagine, that one who is privileged to address so large and representative an audience feels impelled to speak along the lines of his own most intimate concern and belief. I trust I may convince you that the history and atmosphere of this particular university community lends the most persuasive argument that could readily be found of the influence of the scientific aspects of medicine on medicine as a whole.

Medical science and its influence on the education of practitioners of medicine is naturally not fully understood by every one and indeed not always appreciated in some of its aspects by the medical profession at large. The public has heard that medicine as it is practised is some mysterious combination of art and science, embodied in a single individual who comes to their bedside in periods of dire emergency and who

may, at happy intervals, seem to work miracles. The practitioner himself realizes that when he accomplishes such gratifying results it is through application of knowledge acquired from his predecessors, through personal experience, and, he should not hesitate to confess, at times through what appears to be the inspiration of emergency.

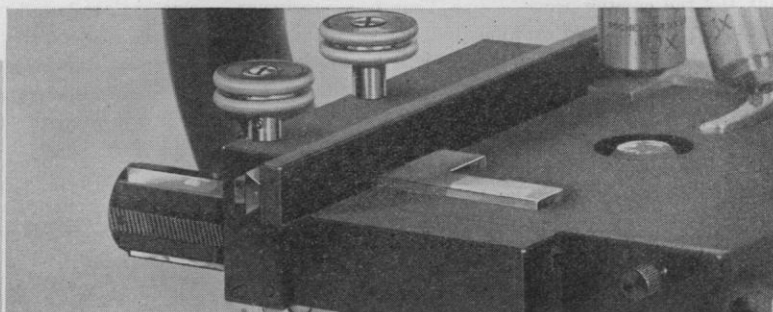
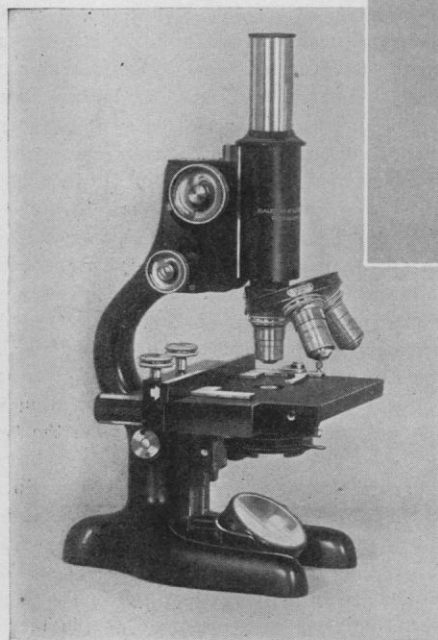
The wise physician, even more than the public, appreciates the present-day necessity of specialization within a complex field which no one man, however wide his interest and however unflagging his energy, can fully encompass. He knows, moreover, that the life work of certain of his colleagues, on whose collaboration he increasingly depends, lies outside the care of individual sufferers from disease. The laboratory man, as he is called, has become differentiated from the clinician or bedside physician as a natural corollary to accumulating knowledge and a division of labor. His particular activities have un-

¹ An address delivered at the 111th commencement of the George Washington University, June 15, 1932.

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