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Training at Bar Harbor

A PRACTICAL test of the wisdom of "Recruiting through Education and Experience" is provided by a program offered ever since its founding in 1929 by the Roscoe B. Jackson Memorial Laboratory in Bar Harbor, Maine. This laboratory is the oldest and largest independent research center in the United States on the biology of normal and abnormal growth. It has long been known that one can recognize at a very early age outstanding ability in mathematics, music, and art. The Jackson Laboratory has shown that the same is true of research ability in biology.

The contact of the individual student with experienced scientists at the laboratory is in the nature of an apprenticeship. The student actually enters the research laboratory, observes the techniques and procedures employed there, and learns by direct experience what causes mistakes and how to progress in efficient and constructive analysis and utilization of material and methods in the search for new scientific truth.

Each year the laboratory receives applications from students enrolled in accredited colleges, graduate schools, and medical schools throughout the country. They are all young men and women who believe that they desire to follow biological or medical research as their lifework. In some cases there remains in the mind of the student some doubt as to whether this is his real vocation, whether he possesses the spiritual and mental qualifications to enable him to enter a life of investigation and research. In an intensive period of ten weeks students are brought face to face with problems that test these qualifications and provide them with a practical challenge, the answer to which may determine their future careers.

The greater part of each student's day is devoted to the development of his individual research problem, and each is assigned as an apprentice to a staff member who works with him. At the end of the summer

the student is required to present oral and written reports of his research project. Certificates are awarded for satisfactory completion of the program and have been commonly recognized by the student's university or college in the form of academic credit.

Those students who return for a second or third summer progress rapidly along lines of achievement that enable them to contribute directly to the discovery of new facts. Many who have been through this apprenticeship period have gone ahead to make their own mark as independent research workers and competent medical scientists, thereby demonstrating that it is possible to recognize, utilize, develop, and accelerate creative research ability. Those who fail or who find that they are not fitted for this type of work do so under circumstances that avoid the blunt, cruel, and impersonal elimination of young minds from our more formal educational efforts. They retain respect and admiration for the search for truth and may in their later experience find themselves in positions where that attitude enables others to obtain and utilize the opportunities for which they individually were not fitted.

It is hoped that members of college, graduate school, and medical faculties will communicate with the Jackson Laboratory and bring into contact with it such students as may be anxious to face early in their academic experience the test of their abilities and aptitudes along the lines of creative work. Students are selected competitively by the resident staff on the basis of sincerity of interest, scholastic record in biology, psychology, and related fields, degree of advancement in their college work, and expression of interest which seems best served by the laboratory's facilities. Applications for places in next summer's tuition-free training course must be made before March 20, 1953.

C. C. LITTLE

*R. B. Jackson Memorial Laboratory
Bar Harbor, Maine*

SCIENCE, founded in 1880, is published each Friday by the American Association for the Advancement of Science at the Business Press, 10 McGovern Ave., Lancaster, Pa. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Lancaster, Pa., January 13, 1948, under the Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at the special rate postage provided for in the Act of February 28, 1925, embodied in Paragraph (d-2) Section 34.40 P. L. & R. of 1948. All correspondence should be sent to SCIENCE, 1515 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington 5, D. C. The AAAS assumes no responsibility for the safety of manuscripts or for the opinions expressed by contributors. Four weeks' notice

is required for change of address, and an address stencil label from a recent issue must be furnished. Claims for a missing number will be allowed only if received within 60 days from date of issue.

Annual subscriptions, \$7.50; single copies, \$.25; foreign postage, outside the Pan-American Union, \$1.00; Canadian postage, \$.50. Special rates to members of the AAAS.

The AAAS also publishes THE SCIENTIFIC MONTHLY. Subscription and advertising rates on request.

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