

# SCIENCE

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## THE ESSENTIAL NEED OF FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH FOR SOCIAL PROGRESS<sup>1</sup>

By DR. ALAN GREGG

THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION

IF there be some measure of truth in the observation that children seek the unknown but adults fear it, then research is a kind of fountain of eternal youth, for research, whose purpose is to meet the unknown, provides our minds with the perennial freshness and delighted curiosity of youth. In meeting here to-day to honor the National Research Council we are happy to celebrate an institution that has brought knowledge to youth and youth to knowledge. We seek to honor the National Research Council for its work, begun in 1916 and still continuing, in the furtherance of research work in the United States of America.

Yet praise is not what research needs: it needs

<sup>1</sup> Address delivered on the occasion of the presentation of the American Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association award to the National Research Council, December 11, 1944 (Hotel Waldorf-Astoria, New York City).

better understanding. Unless the nature and value of research is more widely and more intelligently understood it will not flourish in our democracy. Research requires discrimination of a high order and tenaciously loyal support. Research does not employ magic: it calls for observation, experiment and reasoning. It is not hidden: few human activities are so accurately recorded or so freely communicated. It is not mystical; it rests upon experience and clear thinking. It is not the plaything of scholars: it is the laborious, costly, incessant, painstaking occupation, and preoccupation, of imaginative men and women who are humbly but actively dissatisfied with even the most that is yet known about men and things.

Unless we are prepared in the immediate future to initiate, pursue and support all kinds of research,



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