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### SPECIALIZATION AND RESEARCH

In delivering the John Phillips Memorial Lecture before the American College of Physicians in Atlantic City on April 15th, Dr. Charles H. Best prefaced his address with the following cogent remarks on the problems of research and specialization. They should be of

interest to all workers in specialized fields and particularly to readers of DIABETES.

"We have obviously passed the point of medical development at which an individual physician can truly qualify as a specialist in all branches of internal medicine. The clinical investigator must concentrate even more than the practicing physician if he is to pin-point his target, clearly visualize the problems, and advance knowledge of his special subject. The physiologist is, of course, also witnessing the division of his "country" into scores of "states," the boundaries of which are fixed by knowledge of technics as well as by scientific interest and capacity. I lecture to advanced students only on carbohydrate and fat metabolism, on blood clotting and thrombosis, and on certain aspects of endocrinology and nutrition, but it requires constant application and effort to keep abreast of the advances in these fields. To plan, direct and do good research you *must* frequently think well ahead of existing knowledge. Occasionally it is known to everyone that a great goal has *not* been reached and the literature may be ignored, but the individual who follows this path more often attains oblivion than fame. When a real advance has been made it is a relatively short time before the weight of interest and ability of other laboratory groups force the originators to share or relinquish leadership. This is as it should be and there will always be hosts of glittering new problems for those who can never be completely happy unless they are venturing into some phase of the unknown. It is more exciting to tackle a problem and, if fortunate, to enjoy for even a brief space the thrill of a new trail, than to develop well-established fields—but the latter course may be much more productive. As long as an investigator can continue to attract young minds and to keep his own open to the myriads of opportunities which lie ahead in research, there is scope—and hope—for him."