

FOREWORD

This is a foreword to the series of articles written by his friends and his co-workers to celebrate the achievements of George Richards Minot. It is a good thing thus to give recognition to high scientific accomplishment; it warms the heart of both the donor and the recipient of the recognition, and it reminds other workers that creative thinking is regarded as worthy of praise.

The history and the specific contributions of George Minot are recorded in the bibliography and curriculum vitae which appear on the following pages. Perhaps it is pertinent to inquire what qualities may be associated with this kind of accomplishment.

First of all, George Minot is George Minot, and no one in the world is quite like him. Of course, like almost everyone to whom a "Festschrift" is dedicated, he has been industrious and persistent. He had been surrounded by tradition all his life, and in some ways his reactions and his thinking are highly traditional, but this habit of mind is combined in an extraordinary linkage with an insatiable curiosity and an avidity for understanding that has driven his mind into new and startling regions of thought. That curiosity is a major motive for George Minot is attested by his own writings. "To solve human problems, an active creative imagination and scientific curiosity are necessary tools."

Indeed, the direct desire to explain something otherwise inexplicable may be said to be one of the best motives for research. Its validity in the case of George Minot is shown not only by his own classic discovery of the effectiveness of an adequate dosage of liver in pernicious anaemia, but by his capacity to stimulate curiosity in others, and to gather around himself young men who have curiosity similar to his. The articles to which this note is a foreword make up an adequate example of this side of his character.

To the desire to learn and the desire to encourage curiosity on the part of his students is to be added a great desire to be useful to the sick. If George Minot is to be judged by his motives—a zeal for knowledge, an enthusiasm for teaching, and a humane urge to alleviate suffering and disability—these motives make up a list that lesser personalities may envy.

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