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EXPERIMENTUM PERICULOSUM; JUDICIUM DIFFICILE¹

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It is probably forgotten that the two of us who are to conclude the exercises of this auspicious day have previously been called upon to give some public statement of Yale's relation to medicine—Dr. Welch fully in 1901 as part of the Bicentennial Celebration of the founding of the college, and I briefly fifteen years later for the "Book of the Pageant" celebrating the move to New Haven.

If not forgotten, it may be that we are now asked to take part in the dedication of these magnificent laboratories for a particular reason. Any one, who might happen upon the printed statements, will find that, up to the time of those celebrations, there had been more to say of the contributions to medicine made by Yale graduates in general than of any great influence on our profession, exerted by Yale herself through the agency of this, in point of years, her oldest professional school. The appeal with which Dr. Welch closed his address, namely, that the next Jubilee might find medicine holding here the high position to which it is entitled, has been answered sooner than the most optimistic among us could have expected.

Though the act, passed by the General Assembly in 1810, creating a "Medical Institution" for the college, was the first step toward Yale's development into a university, for the next hundred years the department was allowed to shift largely for itself. The collegians, whose life centered round "the Fence" and the old "Brick Row," hardly knew of its existence; those who did apologized for it; a few warmly advocated the abandonment of a local department which by no possibility could ever compete with the schools of a metropolitan city near at hand where hospitals and clinical facilities existed in abundance. There was a time, indeed, when this recommendation, seriously proposed by certain influential alumni, came dangerously near being followed.

In the want of a hospital under university control, wherein the professors of the school might do their clinical teaching, lay the crux of the situation. The essential importance of such an arrangement was first made clear by certain happenings in Baltimore, where a short fifty years ago a wealthy merchant had left what for the time was a princely sum, partly to found a university, partly to build a hospital. And Johns

¹ An address at the dedication of the Sterling Hall of Medicine, Yale University, February 23, 1925.

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