THE MODERN HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL PROGRESS

To have the privilege of bringing to you the congratulations of my associates of the Rockefeller Institute on this, the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the New Haven Hospital, is at once a great honor and a privilege.

This hospital began as a local organization to care for the sick and suffering poor of the community. We have learned how, from time to time, it has widened its field of activities and increased the breadth of its functions. In doing this it has emerged from its state of provincialism and has become truly cosmopolitan. It no longer ministers only to a small proportion of the inhabitants of a relatively small city, it no longer dispenses its beneficence only to those who enter its portals as patients, but it brings aid to the sick and suffering and protects the well in distant lands. Its influence reaches wherever scientific medicine is practiced. This widening of influence is due to a large extent to the inclusion of education and research into the formula of its functions. In assuming these new obligations this hospital has but reflected the great change which is everywhere taking place in the conception of the proper activities and duties of a hospital.

The idea of hospitals originating in man’s feeling of sympathy and compassion for his fellows in distress, an emotion which very rarely is entirely lacking, even in the most rude and ignorant savage. This spirit of compassion led to the care of the sick and distressed when they are without home and friends. At first this could be done in the protector’s household, but hospitality to such an extent, always difficult and burdensome, must have been almost impossible under primitive conditions. The Greeks organized institutions, Xenodochia, to which slaves could be sent when they were ill or were too feeble to work. The Arabs also organized institutions for caring for the ill, the most renowned one, built in Cairo in the thirteenth century, provided accommodations rivalling those of the hospitals of to-day. It was the coming of the Christian religion, however, with its deep content of the spirit of brotherly love, that stimulated the build-

1 Address delivered at the New Haven Hospital, May 27, 1926, on the occasion of the celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Incorporation of the General Hospital Society of Connecticut.