THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS

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INTRODUCTION

Thanks to the new understanding which has pervaded American medicine during the last forty years, the dedication of a great hospital becomes at the same time the foundation of a new educational institution. For all of the beneficent changes which have come with the reorganization of medical education, the home-coming of the schools and hospitals to shelter under the wings of the universities is perhaps the most significant and important. By this, medicine has taken its rightful place as the science of human biology in which the laboratories form the bridge over which thought and method of the fundamental sciences find their way to the arts of the clinic and the operating room. Here in these splendid buildings, in the coming years, countless thousands will find comfort and relief from pain, new hope and the postponement of sorrow. And the old traditions of our profession will be upheld, to apply our wisdom and our best skill to all who may have need of them, regardless of the trivial differences which, under all other circumstances, keep men distrustful and apart. But here, too, the ranks of our profession will be renewed, year after year, with younger men, wiser than we—if wisely you train them; stronger in purposes of kindness and human understanding; learned as we could not be, and more skillful.

In all human affairs there is a curious lag between the acceptance of high principles and the application of such understanding to practical purposes. In politics, to realize this, one need only sit in the gallery of Congress and remember that Plato wrote "The Republic" 2,400 years ago. In religious thought we are nineteen hundred and thirty-one years along, and it is best not to say anything more about it. In medicine, the dependence of progress on the disciplines of chemistry, physics and biology has been impressed upon us since the beginnings of the 19th century; and only now are we finally organized, within great universities, as a technical branch of learning, where...
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