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HOSPITAL AND LABORATORY¹

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THE formal opening of this hospital and clinic is significant of something of far greater importance than throwing open the doors of a new building which is imposing and beautiful in its architectural details and perfectly adapted in its plan and equipment to the purposes for which it is intended. This occasion signalizes the inauguration of a great experiment, for which the erection of this magnificent building, the installation of the splendid equipment, and the gathering together of the trained men who are to work within its walls represent but the collection of utensils and apparatus to be used in the performance of the test. That such elaborate plans should have been prepared indicates that those who have been responsible for this great undertaking possess a profound and abiding conviction and belief in the probable correctness of the idea, the truth or falsity of which is to be tested. These intrepid innovators believe that that branch of knowledge which has to do with disease in man has reached a stage in its development which entitles it to occupy a dignified and important place in the group of subjects which the university considers its domain. The fund of information concerning disease has grown to a sufficient bulk, the methods devised for its investigation have become sufficiently accurate, the subject itself is of sufficient interest, and its importance in all that relates to human welfare is sufficiently great to justify the prosecution of its study as an aid in the interpretation of nature, and not, as in the past, only as a part of the discipline required for engaging in a practical profession. This idea is not new, it did not originate in the minds of those responsible for this experiment, it did not spring forth fully formed like Minerva from the head of Jove. There have been many preliminary experiments, *Vorversuche*, but here in this relatively young university, which has been the cradle of so many fruitful innovations in the field of education, this idea is to receive a trial with facilities worthy of the importance of the issue.

It is especially appropriate that this experiment should be made in this great institution whose own commencement involved not one, but many experiments. President Harper early spoke of this univer-

¹ Address delivered at the dedication of the Albert Merritt Billings Hospital and the Max Epstein Clinic of the University of Chicago, November 1, 1927.

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