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Current Comment

THE GREAT PHYSICIANS

Some time ago, as noted in *THE JOURNAL*,¹ students in a class in medical history were asked to name the five greatest contributors to medical progress. In their choice, Pasteur, Hippocrates, Harvey, William Osler, Lister, Koch, Galen and Laënnec were the leaders. The editor of the *Medical Press and Circular* now makes his own selection, which includes Hippocrates, William Harvey, Sydenham, John Hunter and Louis Pasteur, selected in chronological order; and, as a second group, Jenner, Laënnec, Simpson or Morton, Lister and Roentgen. As might have been expected, British physicians displayed more interest in the matter than was shown by American readers, perhaps because the cultural aspects of medicine assume a somewhat more prominent place in British medical education. A correspondent of the British periodical suggests the replacing of John Hunter on the first list by Morgagni on the grounds of precedence, and the replacing of Pasteur by Lister for a reverse reason. Another correspondent has felt that Lister should by all means replace the name of John Hunter on the first list, citing that the only reason for including Hunter was the great number of his contributions to exact knowledge. It is interesting to note that not one of the British observers has felt that the name of William Osler, which loomed so large on the horizon of the medical student, should be placed among the names of the ten great contributors to medical science.
