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"WHY IS IT SO?" IS IT SO?

About your statement that young physicians are loath to enter general practice, I cannot express an opinion, but surely you have misjudged the situation in internal medicine. As I see it, the outlook in the United States has never been so hopeful. Take two or three indications. Compare the numbers in attendance at the surgical and medical sections of the A.M.A. for the past ten years. I have not the figures as I write, but you will find that there has been a steady increase in the medical section, numbers of which now exceed those in the surgical section. The surgeons have had their day - and they know it! The American St. Cosmas and St. Damien - the Mayo Brothers - have made their clinic today as important in medicine as it ever was in surgery. Wise men! They saw how the pendulum was swinging. And lastly, the schools are everywhere organizing up-to-date medical clinics, which are attracting the pick of the younger men, who are keen to realize that the future is, as indeed it ever has been, with medicine. In wagging the medical dog the surgical tail has been an immense stimulus, and if in many places only the tail is visible, where does the fault lie? In not organizing in every hospital of one hundred beds a good medical clinic for ONE man with paid assistants and a good clinical laboratory. Let the smaller institutions begin to spend as much on the medical as on the surgical clinic, and give the young physicians a chance.

May I finish with a medico-chirurgical story from the life of George Mareschal, who fought such a good fight for French surgery in the early part of the eighteenth century? Mareschal cut Fagin, the chief physician to Louis XIV, for stone. At that time the surgeons and physicians were sworn foes. After the operation, when Mareschal would give to his patient some counsel as to diet, the bitter old

man repulsed the surgeon with the remark, "I have need of your hands, but, thank God, sir, I have no need of your head to order my way of life!"

Times have changed - and are changing!

Yours,

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