

Urge Study of American Medical History

Medical History

The first duty of the newly founded Department of the History of Medicine of the Johns Hopkins University will be to investigate the early medical history of our own continent, if the advice given at the dedication ceremonies by Prof. Karl Sudhoff of the University of Leipzig is followed.

Prof. Sudhoff is the greatest medical historian of our age, possibly of any age, and the high esteem in which he is held by Dr. William H. Welch, who will direct the new department, makes it likely that his advice will be followed.

The study of early American medicine will go back to the Incas, Mayas and Aztecs, whose ruined cities are now being investigated by archaeologists. All American and South American medicine, both ancient and modern, is an especially appropriate

field for investigation by the new department, but this department's field is really world-wide, Prof. Sudhoff declared.

"A physician who knows only medicine, does not even know medicine," Prof. Sudhoff quoted, explaining that without historic perception the physician lapses into a mechanic. He also emphasized that an important phase of medico-historic investigation is its unifying function with reference to the basic disciplines and the many specialties of scientific medicine.

Dr. Welch himself, who is now professor of the history of medicine, believes that a study of medical history by periods is desirable. Also, he said that a knowledge of actual medicine, such as may be gained from actual practice, is of utmost importance before an attempt is made

to write medical history. He attributed much of Prof. Sudhoff's own success as historian to the fact that he was a physician before he became a historian.

Because of the "tumultuous" state of American universities today, the new department of history of medicine is particularly significant, Dr. Abraham Flexner of the General Education Board, pointed out. With the increased facilities of our universities has come simultaneously an increased cheapness and mechanization which is to be deplored. The new department or institute will lead a return to more cultural aspects of education, particularly along scientific and medical lines, where the emphasis now seems to be almost exclusively technical.

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Medical Examinations for Students

Hygiene

Medical examinations with credits that count toward graduation should be added to school requirements, Dr. Francis E. Harrington, Minneapolis Commissioner of Health and Director of Hygiene, told members of the American Public Health Association at Minneapolis.

Health education and physical development are so important that they should be given the same weight as any other subject in the curriculum in Dr. Harrington's opinion. Children should be required to pass a medical examination as well as other examinations in order to graduate. Dr. Harrington demonstrated a card on

which to record such an examination, and pointed out that standards to base the examination on must be set up.

Because the American people are fast becoming health conscious, opportunities for school health workers will be much better, prophesied Dr. Svon Lokrants, medical director of the Los Angeles city schools. Not only will they have a chance to do better work, but their salaries will be better, for people will realize that only the best in the profession should be employed and that these should be adequately paid.

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Greek Art in Afghanistan

Archaeology

Some 6,000 statues and 500 shrines designed to hold the sacred relics of Buddha have been unearthed by the French during two seasons of archaeological exploration in Afghanistan. Though the subject is Buddhist the sculpture shows the unmistakable influence of classic Greek art at its best, according to J. Barthoux, in charge of the excavations.

Traces of Greek art have been found in Asia before dating from the time of Alexander's conquests but the masterly execution and number of the pieces can only be attributed, declared M. Barthoux, to the importation of Greek artisans on a large scale. The amazing variety of the

racial types presented makes the collection of interest to ethnologists as well as classical students. A Greek Apollo is shown throwing flowers at the sacred Buddha while Scythian faces wear Phrygian caps, and Dante-like heads and figures might have been stolen from the stone carvings of some mediaeval cathedral.

Internal evidence apparently dates the collection after the time of the Seleucidae, the generals who divided up the empire of Alexander. The share of the statues which was due the French, according to the terms of the contract with the government of Afghanistan, is now housed in the Musée Guimet.

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Undesirable fish are removed from streams in Germany by use of a strong electric current which stuns the fish, so that suckers and carp can be netted.

School children in Palestine are acting as sanitary inspectors to aid school nurses and the health department in raising the standards of public health.

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