Medical Students and Alumni

Medical students are the grain, and alumni the grist, of a medical college. In previous chapters the students have received only such attention as was related to the main story of progress and accomplishment; alumni, as such, have been ignored wholly. Now it is appropriate to devote some attention to these human elements without which medical schools and enlightened medical practice cannot exist.

STUDENTS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES

Scholarly horizons

The premedical student pursues the studies prerequisite to medical admission, but in many instances only as credits to be inscribed in the record books. Too often he disdains to follow the advice of advisors or medical educators in broadening his education. Especially if his grades have been unimpressive, is he inclined to heap up science courses for two reasons. One is in the hope that later grades in elective courses will show improvement over mediocre grades in required courses. Secondly, there is a belief that by taking work that in some way duplicates the medical courses in basic science, not only will the latter be easier to manage as a medical student but also failure may even be averted among the stouter competition to be encountered there. This action limits the acquisition of a broad cultural background, so desirable in an exponent of a learned profession but so out-of-reach while still a medical student in course.
The medical student, having about the same qualifications, gradewise and degreewise, as a student entering a graduate school, has a quite different outlook. He is not nearly so curious or interested in learning for its own sake. Rather, his intellectual motivation centers about information and concepts that seem to hold promise of eventual practical application to the sick. On the contrary, a typical graduate student on a Ph.D. program finds the several courses in basic science presenting a coveted opportunity to acquire an introduction to the elementary concepts of a number of different disciplines, and the time allotted to each all too short. By contrast, the average medical student is inclined to view the basic sciences as necessary prerequisites to the Elysian clinical fields, with some practical information forthcoming, but much irrelevant or solely “for the birds.”

But when the preclinical student pontificates on what should be omitted for lack of ‘relevance,’ it is then that his unfamiliarity with clinical needs becomes all too clear. Also, pleas for relevance are too often bids to escape the rigors of hard study and the tedium of the laboratory. Yet one can sympathize somewhat with the medical student who, lacking overall perspective, feels that there is so much that he has to know that he must hew to the line and avoid cumbering his mind with seemingly curious trivia.

At some time following the Sophomore year the average student has to learn that good medicine is applied science, with its roots very deep in the subjects previously viewed almost patronizingly. He will also learn by observation that the clinicians he admires most, dip unreservedly into the reservoirs of basic science. Happily, this awakening does reach the vast majority of tyros sooner or later. Such come to realize that the real difference between their formerly conceived “practical doctor” and the “scientific doctor” is that many more of the latter’s patients get remarkably astute diagnoses and treatment, return to health more frequently and live longer. And so it is that somewhere between clerkships and residencies most of the students begin to assume a scholarly attitude toward the practice of medicine. Also comes the realization that a profession carries with it a backlog of information not at the moment marked with the dollar sign.
The changing years

In the lifetime of Northwestern University Medical School, thirty years passed before a high-school education was required for admission; forty years elapsed before one year of college was required; and it was seventy years before three years of college preparation became necessary. Beyond question, the educational and cultural background of medical students has improved markedly with the years, and especially so in the twentieth century. Present-day students are much better informed and more sophisticated than those of a half century ago, just as these, in turn, surpassed earlier ones who came directly off frontier farms and mines, and out of semi-urbanized towns and cities. In recent decades students have become more concerned with national and international affairs. They also seek a voice in policy shaping, curriculum planning and in various operational details of the school. They question authority, are unawed by age or prestige and are individually far less docile.

Class of 1881, about the entrance of Mercy Hospital; Dr. N. S. Davis (with top hat) stands centrally above the steps.
Medical Students and Alumni

and submissive than were their predecessors.

In contrast to this pleasant picture, it was disturbing to find that in the fifth decade of the present century the premedical grades of enrolled medical students declined alarmingly throughout the country. Various explanations attempted to account for this decline, among which were the widespread subsidies offered graduate students in the physical, biological and behavioral sciences, the steady demand for engineers whose training is usually finished before a premedical student of equal age begins his long grind toward a medical education, and the competitive solicitation of college graduates by big business. Other deterrents to medical aspirants included the high cost of a medical education, the many years spent in attaining an adequate training, and the concomitant postponement of earning independently an income until their early thirties. In the next decade a reverse toward better preparatory scholarship may have occurred. At least, scores in the premedical
aptitude tests showed an upward trend that is interpreted as a slight increase in intellectual caliber of the more rigorously selected matriculants.

In the years since World War I the number of applicants increased so greatly that the selection of promising students became a safer, if not easier, task. Aptitude testing furnished a type of information not formerly available in judging candidates. Guidance of prospective students by advisors and through membership in premedical clubs has been indirectly helpful. As a result, gross misfits among those entering the Medical School are now a rarity. The number of incompetents, who drop out voluntarily or are eliminated from the first year class by faculty action, has decreased from a high of twenty per cent, or more, in early years of the century to an amount nearing zero. With a general improvement in quality came an increase in those who achieve more than a bare passing average.

Personal appearance and tidiness of dress tended to improve over the years. Partly due to the safety and electric razor, stubbles disappeared from those who pretended to shave, but did so only intermittently, while multistyled beards were abandoned by those who hoped to look prematurely professional. No longer did Senior class pictures resemble an assembly of middle-aged men. The abandonment of rough-house and even pitched battles in and about the School encouraged better dress, but stricter public standards probably accounted for most of the improvement. Yet in the late Sixties and early Seventies came a complete reversal in cosmetic and sartorial standards. Grotesque facial adornments and uncouth clothing became the vogue, but happily this was only a temporary one since already there are clear signs of betterment.

Deportment is certainly better than formerly. The old time tradition that medical students were "tough," and that this reputation should be preserved (including such gaucheries as chewing tobacco while dissecting) lasted more than half of Northwestern's first century, as did the correlated Saturday-night saturnalia. Nowadays students are more careful of individual behavior, because their longer preparation puts more at stake; also the knowledge that ouster for any cause precludes re-entry elsewhere is a relatively modern deterrent. The interclass riots, the rough-housing in the amphitheatres, the battles with anatomical fragments in the dissec-
tion room, the wanton destruction of school property in class fights, or even in protest when professors were late to class—these incidents of the first half century of the School faded rapidly in the second half. For one thing, they disappeared as the students began to do things in the laboratories and clinics, and were no longer driven into a periodic release of energy by inaction and boredom, as one didactic lecture followed another. Also they disappeared as the introduction and lengthening of undergraduate college life provided an early and ample outlet for horseplay. Hence the later medical student started his professional training fully tamed, and no more was it necessary to threaten calling in the police because behavior got out of hand. And no longer did students offend by perpetrating such gross irregularities as diverting dispensary patients for private treatment in lodgings or eloping with another man’s wife. (In these specific instances from other years the first malefactor was disciplined and the latter was denied a diploma.)

An early instance of successful insubordination came at the graduating exercises in 1878 when the Seniors, though searched, were found guiltless of bringing forbidden contraband into the church. Their seeming innocence rested on the connivance of girlfriends who smuggled fake programs under their shawls. While the minister prayed at length the scurrilous pseudoprograms were distributed. The front page bore the headline: “Another Bunch of Sawbones to Swell the already Hyperemic Ranks of Disease Accelerators”. The alleged order of events came under the heading, "Bill of Fare," while under another heading, "Chancres", classmates were characterized and vilified.

Professor Younger, of the class of 1902, wrote in reminiscence that the student of his time was a rough customer—raw, rollicking, roistering and rambunctious. He tells of an invasion by Juniors into the small lecture room of Davis Hall, already occupied by Sophomores, and the resulting battle that led to many personal injuries and the reduction of half of the seats to kindling wood. The rowdy practice of ‘passing up’ students was developed to a fine art (p. 349). A favorite among the missiles used in amphitheater throwing-battles were pithed frogs salvaged from the physiological laboratory. Teachers who unwisely attempted to still those storms found themselves subjected to indignities: one was showered with frogs; some were placed on the revolving table in the pit of the
amphitheater and spun around; others were hooted at and otherwise mistreated. Whether a professor were world-renowned or not, he had no place at one of these wild parties and was wise if he remained outside the lecture hall until the hurricane blew over.

The Chicago newspapers delighted to give front-page treatment to hair-raising episodes at any medical school in the city. About 1890 the editor of the *Chicago Tribune* wondered how it was possible to make gentlemanly, refined physicians out of such hilarious, restless material. Robert Louis Stephenson once shared similar curiosity as to where the horrible, dirty, drunken medical students of Scotland went, and where the dear, old, respectable family practitioners came from! The students of today, though relatively sedate and conformable, have not wholly lost the potentiality of revolt and unconventionality. This is amply attested by the seizure of an administrative office, with accompanying demands (p. 304), and by the transit of naked 'streakers' through classes in session.

The type of studying changed, with the decline of the formal lecture as the sole source of information. A new approach was introduced by the greater use of recommended textbooks, the extension of laboratory work and the increased utilization of the clinics and hospitals. No longer was it held that the chief objective had been gained when students took notes, improved them by joint efforts, and then memorized them and conducted drill classes to ensure letter-perfect recitals. Incidentally, it can be hoped that the extensive series of mnemonic systems, oftentimes bawdy and used solely as crutches to pure memorizing, have been replaced by more rational methods of learning and retention.

A recent change, particularly since the last World War introduced governmentally subsidized wives and babies, has been the increase in the number of married students. Once this was a rare phenomenon, and later an occasional occurrence. Now, by graduation time, one-third of the Senior class has married, and half of these have produced children.

*Self-help*

Working one's way through medical college was not too difficult
when the annual term was only sixteen weeks or, in the early years of the Chicago Medical College, even when the terms had been advanced to the then high standards of five and six months. But the progressive lengthening of the annual term and the corresponding increase in tuition rates introduced problems for the poor boy. Yet even by the turn of the century it was said that any student who had a consuming desire to study medicine could earn his way fully by work during vacations and during the school year. The economical student, who lived frugally, was able to make out with an expenditure of $400 each year.

One way of cutting costs is by reducing expenses. Traditionally this was done by such methods as keeping a physician’s office in order, tending his telephone evenings or even handling night emergencies in exchange for the privilege of sleeping on the premises. This service grew into industrial or municipal night-jobs where pay became at least a part of the compensation. In later years hospitals came to offer room, board, laundry, and even cash besides, for a few hours’ work at evening extern service. Self-boarding dwindled with the years, except for the increasing number of married students, and for those jointly renting an apartment, but earning one’s board as a waiter lasted long as a perennial method of saving money.

The second way of meeting expenses is by earning money as a side endeavor. Around the turn of the century a popular method was delivering newspapers. Many Northwestern students owned paper routes, with subscribers numbering from 300 to 500. An established route was bought and sold for about as many dollars as there were subscribers. A good route earned at least $30 a month, and this was at a time when two to three dollars was a laborer’s wage for a long day’s work. Similarly, the lighting of street lamps was considered lucrative. A good lamp route earned about a dollar a day and required not more than two hours’ work. Another favorite job was the reading of gas meters which, however, had the disadvantage of demanding several days’ absence in a stretch. Still other jobs of the Victorian age were serving as janitors in neighboring flat buildings, and similar work in the mansions nearby the School’s locations on the South Side. In subsequent years the number of students engaged in outside work for pay diminished, although probably one-third of the present-day student body does
something of this sort during the four years of its enrollment. But especially since World War II a most important factor in income-production has come to be the young wife who continues as a wage earner.

Although the costs of a medical education are much higher than years ago, so are the earnings of students. For many years part-time work during the school year and full-time vacation work would go about as far toward meeting expenses as was the case at earlier periods when both tuition and living costs were very low. But this is no longer true. An additional complication in the planning of college and professional education for children has been experienced by parents who find that the debased value of earmarked savings falls short of the anticipated aid. Nevertheless, along with the steadily rising fee for tuition has gone increasing financial aid through the School (p. 261). This reaches sixty percent of our student-body, and exceptionally may cover the full cost of tuition and living expenses. Unhappily, the Federal assistance through 'capitation grants' is on the basis of intervention in the internal programs and decisions of complying schools.

**Intellectual life**

The full schedule of the medical student precludes indulgence in many extracurricular activities. Periodically there have been attempts to form clubs for the study of special topics, for the review of current journal articles, and for the familiarizing of students and Faculty with research carried out in the various departments of the School. None has maintained a long or continuous life. Special lectures sponsored by the School and by several of the medical fraternities have been important events that enabled students to see in the flesh persons of national and international reputation. Sponsored awards for students are made annually for excellence in research or for academic achievement.

The honor societies act more as media for the recognition of superior attainment and promise, than as stimulating agents for the promotion of scholarly pursuits. Alpha Omega Alpha came into existence in 1902, on the inspiration of a student at the University of
Illinois, but a faculty representative of Northwestern University and another from the University of Chicago also took part in the details of organization. This fraternity, as the primary honor society of North American medicine, has a chapter in every school (currently 103) that has been deemed worthy. Not more than one-sixth of a graduating class is eligible for election. Selection is made on the basis of high scholarship, morality and clinical promise in the broadest sense of these terms. But the primary consideration, as is even more true of Phi Beta Kappa, is high scholarship. Locally, Pi Kappa Epsilon was founded at Northwestern in 1921 with the aim of creating a society in which, by general student vote, members would be chosen on the basis of scholarship, good citizenship, social qualities and progressive mindedness. Originally it was designed to embrace medicine, law and dentistry, but quickly limited itself to the medical field. The fraternity placed chapters in several other schools. It enjoyed an active life during the school year and emphasized service features — of use to the administration and with annual projects for the benefit of the student body. It became inactive in 1970, at a time when student interest in fraternities in general reached a low ebb.

The first graduate degree (A.M.) received by a medical student was awarded on graduation, in 1881, to F. S. Johnson, subsequently Dean of the Medical School. Yet this recognition was not 'earned' in the modern manner (p. 167). By 1978, 826 candidates, both undergraduates and graduates had earned the Master's degree; between 1922 and 1958 the Ph. D. degree was awarded to 401 individuals. For many years medical students, qualified for registration in the Graduate School of the University, have been permitted to use eighteen quarter-hours of credit obtained in the preclinical sciences toward the fulfillment of graduate requirements. This credit can reduce the work for the Master's degree to the research project and thesis.

Extracurricular literary pursuits have found relatively little place in student life at this Medical School. Many years ago, one or two persons were on the staff of the College newspaper and for a long period several representatives of each class collected material for the University year book, the Syllabus. In 1895, Howard J. Ricketts (later, of Rickettsia fame) and another student approached the Faculty concerning the establishment of a "college paper."
attempt apparently was the basis of what was later designated as "so dismal a failure that it might be called an abortion."

Nonetheless, a distinctive Medical-School publication did make its appearance early in the new century. This was a type of 'year book,' edited and sponsored by the Junior Class. It was quite a different thing than *The Corpuscle*, which was a student-run journal at Rush Medical College, or *The Plexus*, which was a joint student-faculty journal at the College of Physicians and Surgeons (later the University of Illinois). In 1902 there appeared the first of these pretentious year books, under the name of *The Neoplasm*. It contained 150 pages, and was richly illustrated. There were contributions from the Faculty, alumni and others (including stories by George Ade and Richard Henry Little). A revival of *The Neoplasm* in 1905 was larger (246 pages) and more elaborately illustrated (600 figures) than the first issue. Among other features, it contained cartoons by John T. McCutcheon, already well along the road to fame. At the time it was adjudged to be probably "the most elaborate annual ever published by any professional school." With this final recurrence of *The Neoplasm*, literary fervor subsided for more than a half century. An ephemeral literary magazine, *Rootabaga Country*, appeared in 1968 and another, *Honey and Salt* in 1969.

**Social life**

The oldest social organization among the students was the Young Men's Christian Association. Its precursor was started by two students who set out to form a band of workers who would "promote Christian life among medical students." A permanent organization, affiliated with the Y.M.C.A., was achieved in March, 1890. This local society was the first branch of the Association to enter any professional school west of the Allegheny Mountains and was the second of the sort in America. It was also the beginning of the Intercollegiate Department of the Association in Chicago which, within fifteen years, was represented in nearly twenty collegiate institutions of the area.

The religious and recreative features of the Y.M.C.A. organiza-
tion at Northwestern followed the usual pattern. Yet President James, lamenting the absence of religious influence among students of professional schools the country over, thought that Northwestern should no longer lack this essential. "There is no reason," he said, "why a student of Medicine should be any less a Christian than a student in Liberal Arts." The President might have had intimate knowledge of undergraduate paragons within his immediate purview but, since he resigned after an incumbency of only two years and before fairly settling into his duties, one wonders how he had come by an equally intensive evaluation of medical students isolated, sixteen miles away, on the South Side of the city!

In 1900 half of the space on the fourth floor of Davis Hall was set apart for the use of the Association. Part of the long, continuous room was equipped as a gymnasium (p. 351). An information bureau served entering students and assisted them in finding lodgings that had been inspected and approved. An employment bureau canvassed employers and found part-time jobs for all who needed to work. After a while, the need of more adequate quarters and the desire for a student dormitory led to a more ambitious proposal. Plans were drawn for a building to cost $35,000, toward which the students, Faculty and alumni pledged $15,000. The University, when asked to help, declined to appropriate money but appointed a committee to help raise funds; nothing further came of the movement. Later the gymnasium gave way to library space, and the Association was assigned a room in the basement of the Laboratory Building; still later it had an office in the Ward Building. For a considerable number of years a full-time, trained Secretary was in attendance, both at the Dearborn Street site and on the new Campus. After some years of operation on the Chicago Campus, prior to World War II, the service-features were met by other agencies and the organization became inactive.

Medical fraternities arose and spread throughout the country as a successful means of providing companionship and agreeable living conditions in contrast to the bleak and lonely life of independent lodgers. A contributory factor was the usual location of medical schools in regions of cities where clinical material was abundant, but satisfactory housing failed. In fact, one important national medical fraternity (Phi Rho Sigma) that originated at Northwestern sprang into existence, according to its chief founder, as a
device aimed specifically at combating loneliness.

For much of 200 years the medical colleges and universities throughout the land displayed little social conscience or sense of responsibility concerning the living conditions to which their medical students are subjected. Only in recent years have a few institutions, by the fortunate acquisition of earmarked gifts or as a businesslike hedge against the inflationary menace toward endowment funds, begun to build medical dormitories. Thus it is that throughout many decades the medical fraternities have performed a meritorious service in providing companionship and tolerable living conditions for tens of thousands of students. By the same token, the medical colleges and universities owe a vast and unacknowledged debt to these fraternal organizations for assuming a responsibility and burden that they themselves, as a calculated policy, long chose to ignore.

For many years national medical fraternities were well entrenched at Northwestern. Chapters that have shown strength and persistence, with the years of local establishment indicated, are as
follows: Phi Rho Sigma (1890); Nu Sigma Nu (1891); Alpha Kappa Kappa (1901); Phi Beta Pi (1902); Phi Delta Epsilon (1907); Phi Chi (1920). Chapter houses were maintained when the Medical School was located on the South Side. In the later years of that period the abandonment of former mansions on Michigan Avenue, and especially on Prairie Avenue, offered an unusual opportunity for elegant quarters, and commonly at rentals less than the taxes assessed against the properties.

When the Medical School moved to the Chicago Campus, a new set of conditions was encountered by the fraternities. The rapid expansion of business into the Near North Side, following the completion of the Michigan Avenue Bridge in 1920, produced a rapid transformation of what had once been a fashionable, residential neighborhood. It flanked the previously named Pine Street, since 1920 rechristened as North Michigan Avenue. Through advancing commercialization, suitable housing became available only at progressively increasing distances from the Medical School. Rocketing land values and increasing building costs turned any previously nourished building-plans into impractical dreams. As the crisis sharpened, the University went into action by erecting Abbott Hall (1940) as a business venture, the necessary money coming originally from a specific endowment fund.

The medical fraternities at first viewed this dormitory with apprehension as a rival in the bed-and-board appeal. Although their own future in this field was insecure, they feared that life under University supervision would restrict their accustomed freedom. Actually there was some confusion in the student-mind between reasonable privilege and unbridled license. In the end, and for various reasons, previous coolness toward Abbott Hall as a long-term solution to housing problems melted. One by one the several fraternities sought asylum under University auspices, and contracted for living and sleeping space according to individual needs. In practice the experiment was highly successful and most of the burdensome problems involved in running a rooming and boarding house disappeared. The major defect was the lack of private dining rooms, which could not be solved satisfactorily since legal, dental and commerce fraternities were also occupants of the building. One outcome was contrary to what had been feared. It was thought that with the facilities of Abbott Hall open to all, fewer students would
wish to join fraternities, and some of the chapters might consequently become inactive. On the contrary, the interest in fraternities, as such, and their patronage did not suffer for more than two decades.

Several things combined to threaten the continued existence of medical fraternities. One was the rapid increase in student marriage. Another was the downward spread of clerkships into the Junior year and the resulting withdrawal of these students from fraternal participation, as had happened to senior students earlier. Still another was the growing popularity of apartment leasing and home cooking by small groups of students. These several factors depleted the upper classmen from the fraternity floors of Abbott Hall. Finally came a national wave of declining interest in fraternities of all kinds, and in the life-style offered by them — a wave concurrent with student unrest and political activism. The result was the reduction of six active organizations in the Fifties to two still surviving in the middle Seventies. The older of the two is Phi Rho Sigma — the first medical fraternity at Northwestern, and the mother chapter of the national organization of that name.

Deep religious conviction motivated a sophomore and a freshman medical student, in 1931, to start a group at the Medical School dedicated to Bible reading and prayer. This nucleus soon developed into the Christian Medical Society which spread and flourished until now it numbers more than 3,500 clinicians, medical students and dental students. There are 185 chapters located, for the most part, near medical complexes in the United States and Canada. Out of the original Society, through the social concern of its members, grew the Medical Assistance Program that has supplied more than 85 million dollars worth of medicines and equipment to 1,000 medical missions in 80 developing nations of the world. Another outgrowth is the Medical Group Missions. This spin-off operates through medical caravans, each with 20 to 60 physicians and supporting medical personnel, that spend one to two weeks in some undeveloped country.

Organized entertainment

One feature of life in fraternity houses came to be the Saturday-
night floor parties, at first sporadic but later more frequent when six fraternities in Abbott Hall could entertain sequentially on an open-to-all basis. An appreciated boon was the relative cheapness of such modest bacchanalia. A characteristic component of the party was a skit, sometimes remarkably clever and often bawdy, done by members.

A more ambitious production was started in 1952, utilizing talent in the total student body — both medical and nursing. It continued each year, presenting two performances in the Spring to students and faculty, and again to the alumni at their annual reunion. The general name of the production was Quo Vadis Medicus?, a retention of the name of the initial performance. Each presentation was a musical play, built about a central theme, in which the music, lyrics, book, choreography and stage sets were all original efforts on the part of the cast.

The cleverness and technical excellence of these productions entertained and amazed all who witnessed them. The continuous supply of talent in the student body became an annual revelation and the proving ground was commonly the fraternity skits, already mentioned. It seems unlikely that any similarly ambitious series of entertainments has been staged elsewhere by medical undergraduates. Each year brought a new theme, new features and new music. A song hit, Alma Mater Medica, from the 1958 production was adopted as a traditional final number and also, by administrative sanction, as the official song of the Medical School. The support of the financially sound enterprise was withdrawn by the sponsoring Alumni Association in 1960 on the grounds that it distracted participants from their studies and that it tended to overshadow the annual Alumni Reunion Dinner.

Athletics and health

Among the earliest forms of exercise practiced by Northwestern medical students was the type of hazing known as 'passing up.' Steeply pitched amphitheaters were suitable for this pastime, which seemed to flourish in some schools and not in others. It was aggravated into action when the class was kept waiting long for a lec-
turer to appear or an autopsy to be held, and the student-mood did not favor group singing as a way of killing time and working off surplus energy. It was a milder reaction than when the displeasure was vented by assaults on the wooden seats and rails that might lead to riotous proportions. ‘Passing up’ was started by two husky students, just back of the first or second row, who would reach down and hoist up a student. Hands in higher rows would then successively reach forward and swing him onward and upward so that he was transported more or less in midair to the top of the amphitheater. Four huskies always had charge of him — two at his shoulders and two at his feet. The self-propelled, down-stair return was accompanied by a thunderous thumping with both feet by all. In the pit of the main amphitheater at the Dearborn Street site was a revolving table that served to top off a round trip by giving the victim a whirlwind, merry-go-round ride to complete his hazardous journey. A vigorous squirmer or belligerent scrapper presented a mass challenge, but even milder victims might leave buttons and shreds of clothing along the way.

*Final scene of a Quo Vadis Medicus? student production; 1953.*

Dr. Charles H. Mayo (class of 1888) used to tell how his small size and preference for a front-center seat, where he could see clearly, made him a favorite victim of his fellow students. Arthur R. Edwards (1891), later Dean of the School, was so full of animal
spirits that he would goad his mates into trying to pass him up from a front row seat and then resist with all his strength. His mother, the wife of a clergyman, never ceased to wonder why a medical education should cause suits to be torn so frequently and entail so many buttons to be pulled out by their roots. The last performance of this form of student amusement seems to have been at about the time of World War I. A milder form of hazing was to get the morgue attendant to invite a freshman to view the cadavers hanging in rows in the refrigerated morgue and then lock him in for a while. Each victim was ashamed to publicize his experience, and the game continued.

The Medical School created a modest gymnasium in Davis Hall in 1900, and placed it under the charge of the Y.M.C.A. organization. It was equipped with dumbbells, Indian clubs, punching bag, fencing foils and a hand-ball court. A dressing room, with lockers, lavatory and a shower bath was provided. Organized exercise classes, including fencing, were conducted for a period. Then the space was given over, first to the library and then to the clinics, and no other facilities for exercise were available until Abbott Hall opened in 1940 with opportunities for bowling, hand ball and squash. The purchase, in 1977, of the building long used by the Lake Shore Club provided enhanced facilities for living and exercise (p. 232).
Also around the turn of the century, interclass contests in baseball and football were held. A highlight occurred in 1906 when the Senior-class team won in baseball from the University of Chicago varsity. At about the same time football contests with the Chicago Dental College and others are recorded, including practice games with the Universities of Chicago, Michigan and Minnesota. Earlier, in 1901, a Junior-class team played the strong Northwestern second team to a scoreless tie. Much later (1923), Dean Kendall arranged a Thanksgiving-Day game in which a Medical-School team played the Northwestern varsity reserves to a 6-6 tie.

Intramural athletics, organized around fraternity groups and independents, expanded to full proportions when the professional schools came to occupy a common campus. Over the years, contests have included hard and soft baseball, touch football, basketball, track, golf, tennis, swimming, squash, hand ball, volleyball and bowling. Most of these became perennial sports that were organized in leagues in the Schools of Medicine, Law, Dentistry and Commerce. The winners in the several Schools played off to decide the Campus champion in each sport. The grand championship was determined by the greatest number of weighted points collected by a competing group during the school year. In the earlier years on the Chicago Campus, the champion in a sport might compete with the corresponding intramural champion in the College of Liberal Arts. With the recent decline of fraternities such highly organized activities have disappeared.

Early in the new century, medical students were asking why the University did not provide for the hospital care of sick students as did commercial organizations of any magnitude. When ill, medical students kept to their rooms, and recovered or died there. The student publication, *The Neoplasm*, advocated that a hospital fee of one dollar be collected from each student and a uniform charge of five dollars a week be made for hospitalization. The latter sum represented the ordinary cost of living that the student would spend when well. Actually the University had provided a resident physician for women on the Evanston Campus as early as 1883, and in 1912 the presence of a resident nurse marked the beginning of an organized Student-Health Service. Evanston men, however, waited three more years before a four-dollar fee insured them against neglect. On the Chicago Campus, in 1927, Dr. George C. Turnbull
became the first officer in charge of student health. Four years later Dr. Howard L. Alt organized a Student Health Service, which extended later to other Schools on the Campus. In 1945 the Chicago and Evanston units combined under the full-time direction of Dr. Richard H. Young, who soon would become Dean of the Medical School. Besides sick-care, the Service has rendered valuable aid in the prevention and early detection of maladies. Especially notable is the record in tuberculosis, which had formerly occurred in intensity and in focal groups, before detection, to a degree that was scandalous for a medical community.

**Student-faculty relations**

In the final decades of the previous century, "University Day" was celebrated each autumn on the Evanston Campus. It was an occasion participated in by the urbanized schools of medicine, law, dentistry and pharmacy, and was designed to give the students of the various branches within the University the opportunity of mingling, and also to see, if not meet, members of the several faculties. The Evanston students greeted the Chicago contingent at the railroad station, and a procession marched back to the campus for the festivities. It was on one of these occasions that the medical students got blamed unjustly for hiring an Italian organ grinder (and his monkey) to lead the procession, just ahead of the President. Apparently the President could not imagine that there might be a more suspect group, and he made a trip to Chicago to reprimand them. Medical-student reception of a return "slumming" visit by Garrett theological students was marked by no better manners in the dissecting laboratory than were accorded curious policemen (p. 147).

Founders' Day, instituted by Dean Kendall in 1922 to open the academic year, has served to instruct students, and especially freshmen, in some of the lore of medicine, and to acquaint them with the history and personalities that have made the School what it is. Also in the period before classes began, conducted tours through the Medical School oriented the new students with respect to their immediate environment and afforded them an opportunity for meeting the administrative officers. Of late, this procedure has evolved into
a more highly organized and protracted period of indoctrination, including opportunities to confer about prospective careers and to meet the Faculty.

Dean Kendall also organized a Student-Faculty Council in 1916, comprised of representatives of both groups, who met in conferences on matters of mutual interest and importance. It provided a convenient means of transmission of many details of reciprocal relations, not suitable for more formal presentations to either body. After Dr. Cutter assumed the deanship, he sought a different way of making available an agency of prompt communication, advice and action. This was accomplished by selecting younger members of the Faculty as Assistant Deans, one for the Freshman-Sophomore group and another for the Junior-Senior classes. This arrangement, begun in 1931, proved to be valuable and has persisted, although the title of each Assistant Dean elevated to that of Associate Dean. Student activism was largely responsible for the relatively recent creation of a Student Senate (p. 256), reviving a direct mechanism of communication, inoperative for sixty years.

In another direction, student initiative, under faculty supervision, created a voluntary, clinical participation at the neighborhood Erie Clinic (p. 256).

Women students

The first experience of the Medical School with female medical students came in 1869, when four young women were accepted for matriculation, and three of them attended classes during the ensuing session. One, already a graduate physician, received the *ad eundum* degree at the end of the term. She was the only woman ever to receive a diploma from the Chicago Medical College. The other two were unchivalrously denied further registration (p. 117). As early as 1877, seven years after the first affiliation of the Chicago Medical College with Northwestern University, the latter raised the question, but to no avail, as to whether its contract obligated the Medical College to accept as medical students eligible women from the College of Liberal Arts. Also, several years before Northwestern University closed its Woman's Medical College for lack of sufficient patronage, the Medical School declined to furnish these
students preclinical instruction on a contract basis or by union. At the terminal crisis in the life of that College (1902), the School again decided not to absorb them or admit other women. Since the Medical School at that period had only a contractual affiliation with the University, and still enjoyed autonomy on matters of policy, the University was powerless to enforce its suggestions.

Later, on its own initiative in 1913, the Medical School toyed with the idea of opening its doors to women, but could not arrive at a clear-cut opinion. Finally, in 1924, when pressure from the President of the University made it necessary for the Medical Council to take a stand, the decision was made to admit women in token numbers. This action was guided by expediency rather than a general conviction that such a course would be desirable (p. 303). Since then, the experience of the School with young women as students has dispelled early doubts as to the advisability of the step. Also the results disagree with the gloomy predictions obtained from the administrative officers of some other co-educational medical colleges consulted at the time. Winning approbation on merit, these women students became a respected and valued facet of medical
school life at Northwestern (p. 215). They currently comprise one-third of each class.

For some years the early, small group of female students supported a chapter of a national medical sorority (Nu Sigma Phi), but they finally decided to transfer their patronage to the Woman's Auxiliary of the American Medical Association. Only laggardly did the University show any sympathy toward the problem of these young women in having decent living conditions. Yet the stubborn opposition against women students sharing in the use of Abbott Hall was finally overcome, and the official retreat ended an episode that brought no credit to a Victorian administration.

More information pertaining to students can be found on pp. 251, 268, 304, 334.

ALUMNI AND ALUMNI AFFAIRS

The new college that became Northwestern University Medical School did not, for a time, attract large classes. Its longer term, extra year to qualify for a degree, novel curriculum, promotional examinations and greater expense did not appeal to the herd who preferred the traditional, shorter route into medicine. After 25 years of operation there were only 904 alumni; but at fifty years, 2,712 had been graduated. At one hundred years the number was 9,060, which corresponded to a long-term average of 91 annually. The current number of living alumni is 7,200. From time to time alumni directories, both alphabetical and by classes, were included as supplements to the Annual Announcement. This practice ceased with the 1909-1910 issue, and no directory has been published since that time.

The Medical Alumni Office at the Medical School does maintain a register of names and addresses that catalogs graduates alphabetically, by classes, and by states and cities. A further card file records deceased alumni, with accumulated data. Our alumni practice in every State; the most (25 per cent) are in Illinois, while next follows California with 16 per cent. Metropolitan counties, with a population over 10,000, account for 82 per cent of the total.
Now in its 112th year, the Alumni Association of the Medical School is older than that of the University or any of its other component Schools. The alumni of the College of Liberal Arts did not organize formally until 1877, and nine more years elapsed before the first banquet-meeting of those in the Chicago area was held. A general Alumni Association, embracing all Schools, is relatively recent; it came into existence as late as 1921.

After a preliminary meeting, the Alumni Association of the Chicago Medical College was organized in definitive form on March 5, 1867. At that time there were only 172 graduates of the College. The Constitution, then adopted, stated that the objects of the Association were:

... to keep alive and perpetuate that kindly and cordial feeling which binds us together by reason of our common Alma Mater; to encourage the interchange of professional experience and keep alive that ardor among those who are identified with their Alma Mater in attempting to elevate the standard of medical education; and likewise to secure to the institution a record of the professional history of its Alumni.

This statement of purpose never suffered alteration in later revisions of the Constitution.

The first general meeting in the long annual series of the Association was held in the lecture hall of the College on the afternoon of March 3, 1868. The original President was Dr. J. S. Jewell, Professor of Descriptive Anatomy and a member of the first class to be graduated. Later Dr. Jewell became eminent as a founder and first President of the American Neurological Association, and the founder and first editor of the *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*. Interestingly enough, the date of this initial reunion was almost 100 years to a day from the establishment of the first medical college in the United States. For many years the annual meeting was held apart from the banquet that was given by the Faculty to the graduating class, alumni and friends. In that period the presidential address was the chief feature of the formal meeting of the alumni.
Programme.

Toastmaster, Dr. GEORGE W. WEBSTER.

DIVINIR BLESSING, Rev. — — — —

THE FACULTY, — — — — — — — PROF. EDMUND ANDREWS.

"Since brevity is the soul of wit, and tediousness the limbs
and outward flourishes—I will be brief."—Shakespeare.

THE ALUMNI, — — — — — — — DR. E. C. COOK.

"Building nests in fame's great temple,
As in spouts the swallows build."—Longfellow.

CLASS HISTORY, — — — — — — — DR. C. W. WOOD.

"Lest men suspect your tale untrue,
Keep probability in view."—Gage, Fable 18.

THE CLASS OF '95, — — — — — — DR. R. A. LETORNEAU.

"Night after night he sat and bleared his eyes with books."
—Longfellow.

THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS, — — MR. GEO. P. MERRICK.

"How empty learning, and how vain is art,
But as it mends the life and guides the heart."—Young.

THE COLLEGE OF LAW, — — PROF. EDWIN BURRETT SMITH.

"The end of the law is peace; the means to that end is war."
—Von Ehring.

THE COLLEGE OF PHARMACY, — — MR. W. A. DYCHE.

"For human ills he makes the pills,
Powders and lotions too;
And all those things the doctor brings
When he makes his calls on you."—Avondale.

THE COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY, — — — — DR. E. D. SWAIN.

"Uneasy his the head that wears a crown."

THE WOMAN'S MEDICAL SCHOOL, — — PROF. HENRY T. BYFORD.

"Men must be taught as though you taught them not,
And things unknown proposed as things forgot."—Pope.

Program of the first annual banquet of the Alumni Association, then 27 years old; 1895.

After a time interest in such independent meetings waned, and it was decided that it was better to merge the alumni meeting into the College banquet. The guest list of the Faculty-sponsored banquet had previously included all alumni who wished to attend. Now that the occasion was to be a function of both organizations, the Alumni Association decided that its members should pay for their dinners,
so that the money saved to the College could be spent for laboratory equipment. But the policy seems to have wavered with the years, as the Faculty Minutes record. Even as late as 1914 the validity of the School still assuming the total cost (up to $1500) was both attacked and defended. The sentiment finally turned toward paying for the Seniors only and, after a time, for Seniors and their guests and for the fifty-year class as well. This expense is borne by the Alumni Association.

When a general Alumni Association of Northwestern University was formed in 1921, the Alumni Association of the Medical School voted, at its next meeting, to become an affiliated branch of it. By 1929 the Medical Alumni Association numbered 1101 members paying annual dues, and 29 life members. In 1936, 27 per cent of all medical alumni belonged to the Association as paying members. In actual numbers this total almost equalled the representation from the College of Liberal Arts, whose membership percentage-wise was only half as great. In numbers, the paying medical alumni were three times as many as the next nearest professional school.

Dean Cutter suggested that the interests of the medical alumni would be better served if an executive body were in control between annual meetings. Hence, in 1931, a board of counselors was elected, which also had individual members charged with oversight of the following activities: publicity; Northwestern Foundation; personnel; records; and placements. In 1936, this Alumni Council authorized the establishment of an office in the Montgomery Ward Building and the employment of an executive secretary to handle records, reunions, public relations and other interests. An Alumni Center was completed in 1977 by reconstructing the west ground wing of the Ward Building that was formerly occupied by the Medical Clinics. Among other facilities, there is an auditorium, the gift of Dr. George C. Turnbull ('23) and his wife.

The Northwestern University Foundation was organized in 1925. Its declared purpose was to stimulate every graduate of Northwestern University to remember his Alma Mater with a gift each year. After a time, a plan developed whereby the alumni relations of medical graduates to the University were consolidated and simplified. In 1937 the Alumni Council of the Medical School presented a program by which only a single solicitation for a contribution, and that one in behalf of the Medical School, would go
from the University to each medical alumnus. Out of the individual donation would be taken annual dues to the general Alumni Association, whereas the remainder would be credited to the Medical School in the Fund for the Foundation. Also the medical alumni organization would continue in the activities of the general Alumni Association, be represented among its Directors and be entitled to submit names for honorary degrees and merit awards. This proposal was accepted by the general Association. Still later, as contributions to the Alumni Fund increased, dues to the Association were abolished.

As the Centennial of the University approached, the Northwestern University Foundation changed its name to the Century Fund. Afterward, the present name of Alumni Fund was adopted.

The annual gifts from medical alumni have increased with the years, until they now total some $325,000. It would require an endowment of $5,000,000 to produce an equal sum for the budget of the Medical School. Rarely there are some extraordinary benefactions, as in 1974 when the total swelled to $665,000. In 1953 the Senior Class announced, at the annual meeting of the Alumni Association, that 106 of its 129 members had pledged $1000 each as a class gift. This was done under a sense of obligation to the Medical School because of the knowledge that tuition fees had paid but one-third of the cost of their medical education. No time limits were set for payments, each promising to pay in amounts and at times convenient to his financial program. For several years each Senior Class made a similar pledge, but soon it was discontinued. Actually it was not a good plan, since some students pledged under a feeling of duress, many did not redeem their pledges, and others felt that such a contribution, once made, ended all future obligations.

Association activities

At the time of its founding, 1921, the Alumni Association of Northwestern University began a publication, Northwestern University Alumni News; previously the College of Liberal Arts had issued its own News Letter (1903), and Journal (1914). In the early years of the Medical School the Chicago Medical Examiner, as a
quasi-organ of that institution, published news items concerning alumni, college events and the progress of educational reform. Its contributed articles drew largely from Faculty and alumni. Much later (1899-1912) the Bulletin (soon renamed the Quarterly Bulletin) was established to publish the scientific writings of teachers and students and such general college news as might interest the alumni and others associated with the School. On the revival of the Quarterly Bulletin in 1940, essentially the same policy was followed until its demise, in 1962, in order to permit the publication of a more general alumni journal. This was named the Northwestern University Medical School Magazine, and its articles, news, class and faculty items were designed to appeal to alumni interests. After eleven years this journal gave way to the Northwestern University Medical Center Magazine, featuring newsworthy publicity from the total Center, but also containing alumni class news.

Among the activities of the Alumni Association of the Medical School was an “Alumni Week” which started in 1902, and is still observed in an abbreviated form. Originally this annual period featured clinics, given by members of the Faculty, and ended with the annual meeting and dinner. The enthusiasm at the first of these popular reunions is a matter of record. Greetings, backslappings and songs raised the tempo of excitement at the social hour until the courses of the banquet itself were interspersed repeatedly and deafeningly with the School yell of that era:

*Rix! Rax! Rox!
N. U. Medics
Will be Docs!

Other activities of the earlier Association included the offering of prizes to undergraduates for scholarship or other superior performance, aiding in endowment-procural, and erecting memorials to former teachers. Most ambitious and valuable was the sponsoring of the School library between 1883 and 1907 (p. 319 ff.) while, still later, some donations were made to its support. Subsequent to World War II a War Memorial Door to the Archibald Church Library was installed in honor of students, Faculty and alumni who have served in the Nation's wars.

As the years wore on, there arose perennial criticisms that the annual meetings of the medical alumni were dull because of long and
uninteresting reports. More important still, attendance waned and was not considered to be within reasonable expectations. The situation repeated a much earlier crisis when the formal presidential address and the absence of a dinner-meeting failed to attract sufficiently. In the terminal year of disappointment it was decided to enliven the next (1938) occasion with an entertainment which featured a "gridiron" takeoff of members of the Faculty and University situations by the Senior Class. Reported as the most successful and entertaining session within memory, the plan was repeated drawing on individual student talent, appropriating successful fraternity-party skits, and even expanding into a minstrel show.

Semiprofessional and professional performers were also tried, with uneven satisfaction. Eventually the entertainment took the form of the *Quo Vadis Medicus?* musical play produced by medical students and student nurses. After its inception, in 1952, attendance at the reunion and enthusiasm for these occasions reached a new high. Nevertheless, the Association shortly (1960) decided to end its sponsorship of the production, partly on the grounds that it had become a Frankenstein by diverting too much attention from the main purpose of the Reunion Dinner.

In 1871 the Medical School, for some undisclosed reason, dissolved its medical library of more than 1000 books. Twelve years later the Alumni Association volunteered to assume the task of re-establishing this necessary adjunct to the intellectual life of any college (p. 319). They succeeded in assembling a collection containing more than quadruple the number of volumes in the former library. After 24 years ownership and the responsibility for maintenance were transferred to the Medical School. This philanthropic achievement stands high among the activities of the Alumni Association through its 112 years of existence.

Notable among later innovations by the Alumni Association was the founding of the Nathan Smith Davis Club in 1966, with 102 charter members. Currently it consists of 335 loyal and generous alumni, and others, who contribute $250 or more annually to the Alumni Fund. It was especially appropriate to name this club in remembrance of the founder who gave of his time, services and purse so unstintingly to the welfare of the struggling, tradition-breaking institution. A complimentary dinner with a distinguished
speaker is a semi-annual event. Recently the Association instituted a Distinguished Alumnus Visiting Professorship that aims to bring back an eminent alumnus each school-quarter for a two-day visit that includes a lecture and a clinical conference or other feature. It also selects an Alumni Board of Counselors from thirteen geographical regions of the country. This group visits the Medical School at least annually to appraise and advise (p. 242).

Some friendly gestures are extended to the medical students annually. Each Senior, with a companion of his choice, attends the Reunion Dinner as a guest, and is presented with the ceramic drinking cup of the Association. A greeting to the incoming Freshmen takes the form of a copy of the official history of the Medical School, and a social party during his orientation period.

Attention is given to Alumni throughout the year by triquarterly mailings of the Magazine. At the Annual Reunion special recognition is tendered to the fifty-year and twenty-five year classes. Members of the half-century class are honored guests at a luncheon and at the Reunion Dinner where each receives a unique Medical School paperweight and a copy of the History of the Medical School. The quarter-century class attends a complimentary luncheon and each member also receives a paperweight. All efforts to cultivate the alumni attempt to fulfill the promise made by Dr. N. S. Davis at the foundation of the Medical Alumni Association 107 years ago: "And we can assure the alumni... that their Alma Mater will open wide its doors to welcome them at each returning anniversary meeting."

Distinguished alumni

Many alumni achieved fame and have brought honor to the Medical School. From those of the previous century one can select a single representative from each clinical field, but such choices clearly are subject to alternative opinions:

- Gynecology, F. H. Martin ('80); Medicine, F. Billings ('81);
- Neurology, J. A. Jewell ('60); Obstetrics, J. B. DeLee ('91);
- Ophthalmology, H. Gradle ('74); Orthopedic Surgery, D. A. K. Steele ('73);
- Otolaryngology, F. Menge ('92); Pediatrics, I. A. Abt ('91);
Psychiatry, E. Wing ('82); Public Health, F. W. Reilly ('61); Surgery, C. H. Mayo ('88); Urology, L. E. Schmidt ('95).

To these categories might be added a few other activities:

Founding hospitals, D. H. Williams ('83)
Founding national medical societies, J. A. Jewell ('60)
Organizing medical colleges, C. W. Earle ('70)

There have also been pioneers in science, such as H. J. Ricketts ('97) who discovered a new type of pathogenic micro-organism, authors such as J. B. DeLee ('91) whose textbook taught the world how to conduct confinements properly, and editors such as I. A. Abt ('91) whose multivolume system of pediatrics set a new standard as a reference work.

Moreover, there is still another facet to the meritorious record of alumni beyond deserved fame as clinicians, investigators and writers. Professor E. C. Dudley once emphasized this when addressing a reunion of the alumni: "Our history is something more than a Medical School. It has been a nursery of medical teachers — a medical normal school." Even at that time there were, indeed, hundreds of these part-time pedagogues scattered widely over the country. Chicago itself had many representatives and, for a time, the deans of all three major schools in that city were Northwestern graduates. Again, the importance of the teacher was expressed forcefully by President Hadley, of Yale University, sixty years ago in an address at the dedication of the Northwestern University Building for professional schools, in Chicago's Loop:

We make a mistake if we fix our eyes too exclusively on research at the expense of teaching, and estimate the value of a university solely on the former basis. It may be true that one real jurist is worth a hundred ordinary lawyers; that one medical discoverer does more good than a thousand physicians; that one prophet is worth ten thousand preachers of the conventional type. Nevertheless, the institution which tries only to make jurists or discoverers or prophets will fail of giving the country the lawyers and doctors and ministers which it wants. It is in the power of the professional school to be something more than a mere professional school; but not by neglecting its plain duty of technical training.
Alumnae

The graduation of one woman in 1870 (p. 354) was followed by a sixty-year fallow period before medical co-education at Northwestern began to yield a few graduates annually. Since only 150 more were added in the succeeding three decades, the accretion of alumnae to the Association roster has been slow. Only in the past few years, with admissions reaching sixty women annually, is there promise of a still better balance between the sexes in the future.

The full absorption of the Woman's Medical College into Northwestern University in 1892, its waning patronage as co-educational opportunities in the study of medicine increased throughout the nation, and the final closure of the School in 1902 have been described in a previous chapter (p. 119 ff.). For a decade Northwestern University sponsored a man's medical college, which was still autonomous, and at the same time owned and controlled a college limited to women. The two medical colleges were always wholly separate institutions. Upon the liquidation of the Woman's Medical School, the alumnae were naturally disappointed over the unanticipated demise of a presumptively permanent sanctuary under the protection of Northwestern University. They also felt outraged because of a lack of candor on the part of the University in explaining its terminal action (p. 121). Only slight solace came from the knowledge that they were indubitably alumnae of Northwestern University. But some delayed healing of open wounds did occur when they were laggardly admitted to membership in the Alumni Association of the Medical School.

Other mention of women, since their general admission as students in 1926, has been made on pp. 253, 290, 354.