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ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT*

THE GENERAL SURGEON IN THE CHANGING ERA

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ON a Saturday afternoon, forty years ago. abdominal surgery, aynecology, the surgery of

Doctor Geotp Emerson Brewer, one of trauma. Some even do obstetrics, and some per-
New York's fotemoet BUrgeons, and & form Cesarean Brewer6t n fotem6t fotem64

� ~�n�c�h�e�s� of the Syma Amphitheatre at The Roose- training. (C) An ever-en!arging group of young Vltlt HOIIpitai. The program for the day consisted men who have received partial or basic swgical of a cholecystectomy, a nephrectomy, and a trainin~J and, due to the pyramidal structure of Gasseriangangliooectomy. Today, three different the resIdent system, have terminated their for-specialists would perform these three operations, mal training without the experience of a full but Brewer was a general surgeon, as were most of residency.
his contemporaries. Now George Brewer is dead, The older gcncra.l surgeon still has his place in and the old Syms Amphitheatre bas been tom out large communiLies, but the need for him is less as obsolete. Is the general surgeon also obsolete? beca.WIC oC the many specialists to be found in It is well that the American CoU~ of SuI'gEODB, metropolitan centers. }t'or younger men, however, which bas assumed the guidance of BW'gical edug.- the large teaching centers offer opportunity fot' tion and sets its standards, should consider very further study and exp 0.1nther

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pitals informed me that ten years ago it was a common practice to transfer patients from his hospital into a larger, better equipped institution in the city, but that this rarely happens at the present time.
This·is but one of the factors that a1I'ect the general surgeon in this cb~g em. The in· aeased trend toward specialization is another. In the early days of the Egyptians, all the pbysi· cia.ns were specialists to an amazing degree. Herodotus held In high regard the civilization of the early Egyptians; he felt that they were the best informed of all human beings. He writes of certain practices of the time: "The art of medi· cine is thus divided among them. Each physician applies himself to one di!lea!le only, a.nd not more. All places abound in physicians i some physicians are for the eyes; otheJS for the head i others lor the teethj others for the parts about the belly, and others for internal diliorders."
From there the pendulum. swung toward a more sensible level, and physicians took on more re-

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the country." Particularly since the last World
War has the

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knowledge so t.ba.t he can more intelligentir treat
his patients, and this applies not only to cities but
to suburban and rural districts aa well It is ene couragiug to note that the Clinical Congres&eS have been so eminently successful and so well attended that there are only four or five cities that can house the Fellows and their guests.

"In this Tomb Ha.seU Craddock Ues,
Surgeon Senior was of Guy's-

Hopes with the Just one Day to rise. Agreed, he had a there301, Nm, 9.Tnity,6worth 624 55cities 1 5392