THE MAYO BROTHERS.

By HERBERT J. PATERSON, C.B.E., M.D., M.C., F.R.C.S.

One of the greatest of American writers has said "If you make a better mouse trap than your neighbour, all the world will find the pathway to your door." In a small country town of seven thousand inhabitants, away in the prairie land four hundred miles to the North-West of Chicago, the energy and organising ability of two men has built up the greatest surgical clinic which the world has yet known. Founded less than sixty years ago in a very humble way, the Hospital in this far away town has become the Mecca of surgery, to which surgeons from all over the world have made pilgrimage, to do homage to the masters and to gain inspiration from witnessing their work. By the passing, within three months of each other, of Dr. William J. Mayo and Dr. Charles H. Mayo, the United States are the poorer through the loss, not only of two great surgeons but of two loyal and devoted citizens.

The two brothers formed an ideal combination; Dr. "Will," a great organiser and administrator; Dr. "Charlie," an expert and original operator. When I visited the Clinic for the first time in 1907, all the surgical work was done by the two Mayos and the late Dr. Judd. There were no "special" surgeons. Dr. "Charles" was the most versatile surgeon I have ever met. He could not only perform any and every operation but do it with the greatest perfection. Dr. "Will" was also a beautiful operator but confined his work within a more limited range. The Clinic was a model of what team work should be. In those early days I doubt whether anywhere else such a thorough investigation of every patient was carried out. One of the secrets of their success was their readiness and keenness to learn from others. Every year one of the brothers came to Europe and visited the various surgical centres. In this way they visited every important surgical clinic in America and Europe. At the Mayo Clinic one saw a composite of the technique of the best.

I had the pleasure of being Dr. W. J. Mayo's friend and guide when he came to London for the first time. On this occasion he visited incognito all the great London hospitals.

He was a most generous man. In his later years he must have given away the greater part of his income; he and his brother gave more than £600,000 to establish and endow the Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. On the day we left together for London, after a two weeks' stay under his hospitable roof, he gave £20,000 to purchase and lay out a public park.

Dr. "Will" was one of the most modest of men, a charming host, a delightful companion with a rare fund of dry humour. I asked him one day why he did not play golf. His reply was characteristic: "If I wanted exercise I would break stones as then I should be doing something useful."

The outstanding characteristic of Dr. Charles Mayo was his versatility and modest loveable disposition. He was not only a surgeon, for at his country home at Maywood he ran a farm of 70,000 acres, and in his quiet whimsical way he told me that "at the farm he was able to lose some of the money he made in the city." He must have been a very precocious surgeon. The story is related that at the age of nine he went to witness an abdominal operation. During the course of the operation the anaesthetist fainted. Charles Mayo at once took his place and continued the administration of the anaesthetic. The patient recovered. It is mainly

due to the work and teaching of Charles Mayo that the surgery of exophthalmic goitre was advanced and established as a recognised method of treatment. To see him operate for this condition was indeed a lesson not to be forgotten.

It is not perhaps generally known that the father of the Mayo brothers was born at Eccles near Manchester, so that although they were American citizens they came of good old British stock. Although they lived across the sea they were of our own blood and of our own kin. Now they are no more. They have ceased to practise the craft they loved so well but their influence will long remain.

The Origin of the Mayo Clinic.

On August the 20th, 1883, the town of Rochester, Minnesota, was visited by a terrible cyclone which resulted in the death or serious injury of many of the inhabitants. Dr. William W. Mayo, a citizen of the town, assisted by his two sons (W. J. and C. H. Mayo) worked unceasingly to care for those who had been injured in this great catastrophe. In the work they were assisted nobly by four Sisters from the French School which had been opened some twenty years previously by the Sisters of St. Francis. In the following year the Sisters offered to build and equip a hospital if Dr. Mayo would become its chief. The offer was accepted and the hospital was opened in 1885. Originally it contained thirty beds—since then the number has been increased to over four hundred.

From the first Dr. Mayo formed a committee of one. When Bishop Ireland visited the hospital a few years after its inauguration and suggested that the Sisters should share the management with Dr. Mayo, his reply was, "I am quite ready to resign if you wish, but if I remain, I must remain at the head."

A visit to Rochester is a revelation. All the patients are first seen at the "Office," a large building in the centre of the town, replete with every facility and appliance known to modern medicine. The patient does not have to go from house to house to see first a physician, then a radiographer, then a surgeon. Probably nowhere in the world is such a searching and scientific investigation made into the condition of the patient under one roof. The work of the clinic is divided so that each worker can do his part to the best advantage. The surgeon does not have to spend his time discussing the amount of the fees to be paid. These are arranged in a separate department organised for this work. The radiological chemical, pathological and other investigations are carried out by a highly trained band of workers each a specialist in his own branch. Thus, the surgeons are able to give all their time and energy to the diagnosis and treatment of their patients!

If an operation be necessary, the patient is admitted into the hospital (this we should call a large nursing home as all the patients are private patients and pay fees to the surgeon and fees to the hospital for their accommodation). In organisation and equipment it resembles a London hospital. But there the resemblance ends. There is no fettering lay control. American surgeons would not put up with it. The Hospital is owned and financed by the Sisters of the Order of St. Francis, and all profits are devoted to the various charitable agencies of the Order. The Sisters look after the nursing and domestic arrangements, but the authority of the Surgeon is looked upon as supreme, as it should be to secure the highest efficiency. In practice the hand of the surgeon guides rather than rules, for it is obvious to the visitor that the most wonderful spirit of loyalty and brotherhood prevails throughout the Clinic and Hospital. It is all one large happy family.

American surgeons are great travellers, they are keen and receptive of new ideas. They go about from clinic to clinic both in their own country and in Europe.

eager to see all the methods and ready to absorb whatever is good and worthy of adoption. Like the London omnibus driver of the past, who was said to spend his holiday riding on the top of an omnibus, the American surgeon spends his holidays watching other surgeons operate. The result is that in American Clinics one sees some methods employed which are peculiar to the country and many which are characteristic of London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Berne and other surgical centres. Thus one sees a composite of the world's best surgery.

The volume of work done is enormous. I doubt whether anywhere else in the world one can see so much surgical work in so short a space of time. If a surgeon desires to absorb surgical experience in tabloid form Rochester is the Clinic to visit.

In America there are a number of superlatively good surgeons, and their standard is very high. Not that the Americans are more able than their brothers across the sea, but they have greater opportunity. They have a much greater amount of work. The British surgeon is naturally more conservative, less ready to absorb the ideas of others than the American, but on the other hand he is more capable of forming new ideas. His mind is less receptive but more original than that of the American.

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