

## PARAGRAPHS FROM AN ADDRESS

GIVEN BY DR. JUAN ITURBE AT THE SCHOOL OF TROPICAL  
MEDICINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PORTO RICO

I am highly honored by the welcome you have extended me. Having travelled extensively through the Old World and South America in the pursuit of scientific studies and research I have been much stimulated by the knowledge and experience obtained. In fact, the impressions gathered in these odysseys constitute for me the choicest recollections, and the most memorable of them all will be the few days spent with you in Porto Rico.

While here, it has been possible for me to visualize more clearly the aspect which the new America presents—free from secular prejudices which formerly impeded its full development, by deadening its impulses and greatest energies. Your work has been outstanding—a task already foretold by superior intellects such as de Hostos, that apostle of Latin thought who with such clearly defined foresight discovered and outlined the path our people were to follow.

The Antilles have been to our continent a transcript of the sacred Archipelago. From them have flown the eagle of liberty toward terra firma as when Bolívar and his followers blazed the path by means of the sword. These have sent out harbingers of ideas such as de Hostos, whom I have just mentioned, Martí, the romantic hero, personification of thought and action, both of whom have been guests in Caracas, my adopted city, which cherishes as a priceless experience the remembrance of both of these paladins.

But the times have changed. The great purpose of the former times having been fulfilled,—those purposes which represented the real existence of our people,—other problems now demand our most thoughtful reflection and undivided strength.

In one step forward, you, by the creation of the School of Tropical Medicine have responded to the remote call of the great master of letters who was the spokesman of our America and who with the sublime authority of those times proclaimed his conception of one America, the citizens of which were those who, by the supreme right of patriotism in its truest sense, ignored the existence of northern and southern frontiers.

It is difficult for you to imagine the unspeakable satisfaction I

feel in being one of the first among the lovers of research to come to this school and contribute what I can to the scientific labor organized on a basis of real solidarity. I consider myself most fortunate in having the honor of greeting again Professor Ashford whom I met and learned to know at the International Conference held at Jamaica in 1924 and whom I felt I had already known through his textbooks with which I had familiarized myself, as a guide and source of instruction.

This institution is indeed, the fruit of that contemporaneous, humanitarian and communicative spirit engendered through that science which in the words of the Gospel proclaims: love one another—wherever your birthplace may have been or whatever the pigment of your skin. Here, as in London, New York or Tokyo the professional laboratory student investigates—invents means and methods of overcoming the agencies which produce disease, and he does it entirely free from any selfish end of nationalism, and only with his attention fixed on the patient, who from the case viewpoint is first and foremost a neighbor, a member of humanity.

In later years there has been a tendency to repeat the thesis of Rosseau and ignore the progress of those societies; some from a spirit of contradiction such as that revealed in the Genevan philosopher, others from a narrowness of vision who have announced a presumed bankruptcy in the world of science because certain urgent solutions are either slow in being arrived at or are frustrated. But the truth is that experimental science has just begun to establish itself. It has not yet reached one hundred years of existence and there are those who would condemn it without even giving it a fair examination when the smallest accomplishments attained in certain fields of research far exceed anything achieved during the preceding centuries.

Something akin to the spirit of the exorcist and miracle worker seems to have been passed on to you, my honored colleagues of the School of Tropical Medicine, who, secluded in the laboratory penetrate the secrets of Nature and learn how to conquer the transmissible agents of death.

May we with fully enlightened conscience affirm our faith in the power of man united to the efficacy of science. This last, benefits and enriches society, eliminates pain and creates that principle of solidarity taught by religion which due to it, is to-day a potent factor among the people of the universe.