

Dedication of the new building and hall of the Boston Medical Library Association, 19 Boylston Place, December 3, 1878.

Contributors

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Royal College of Surgeons of England

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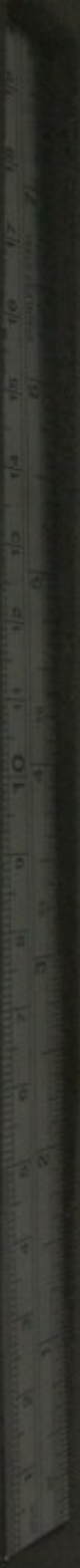
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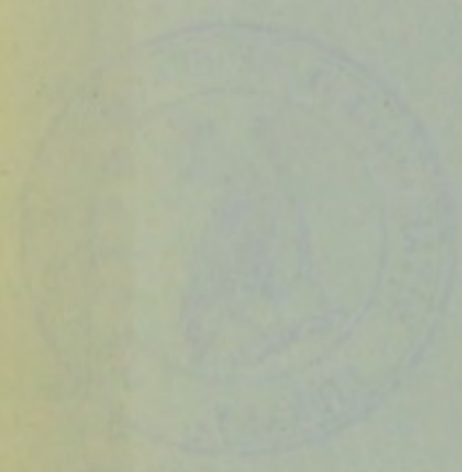
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ADDRESS delivered at the Dedication of the Hall of the Boston Medical Library Association, on December III., MDCCCLXXVIII., by Oliver Wendell Holmes, M. D., President. [Report of C. P. Putnam, M. D. [Remarks of J. S. Billings, M. D., Prof. Justin Winsor, G. H. Lyman, M. D., Pres. C. W. Eliot, D. P. Smith, M. D., C. Ellis, M. D., H. I. Bowditch, M. D. [Exhibition of Medical Portraits. [Report of the Librarian, James R. Chadwick, M. D., read at the Sixth Annual Meeting, held on October IV., MDCCCLXXXI. [Report of J. C. Shattuck, M. D., on the Directory for Nurses.



with regards of
James R. Chadwick

1852
1851
The report of F. C. Spatcher, M. D., on the Director's
the fifth annual meeting, held on October 14, 1851,
the report of the Librarian, James H. Chadwick, M. D.,
J. I. Bowditch, M. D., President of the Medical
Society, M. D., Secy. C. W. Child, M. D., C. C. Child,
M. D., J. S. Billings, M. D., Prof. Justin Collins, M. D.,
President. Report of G. H. Putnam, M. D.,
M DCCCXXXVII, by Oliver Wendell Holmes,
Boston Medical Library Association, on Decem-
ber 23rd delivered at the Decoration of the Hall



Book reported of
James H. Chadwick

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DEDICATION

OF THE

NEW BUILDING AND HALL

OF THE

Boston Medical Library Association,

19 BOYLSTON PLACE,

December 3, 1878.

ORDER OF EXERCISES.

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT, DR. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

REPORT OF THE BUILDING COMMITTEE.

REMARKS BY

DR. J. S. BILLINGS, U. S. A., LIBRARIAN OF THE NATIONAL MEDICAL LIBRARY IN WASHINGTON.

PROF. JUSTIN WINSOR, LIBRARIAN OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

DR. GEORGE H. LYMAN, PRESIDENT OF THE MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY.

CHARLES W. ELIOT, LL. D., PRESIDENT OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

DR. DAVID P. SMITH, OF SPRINGFIELD, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY.

DR. CALVIN ELLIS, DEAN OF THE HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL.

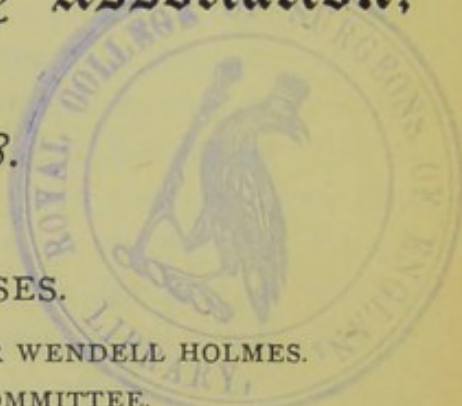
DR. HENRY I. BOWDITCH, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE MEDICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION; EX-PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

LIST OF LOAN EXHIBITION OF MEDICAL PORTRAITS.

CAMBRIDGE:

Printed at the Riverside Press.

1881.



DEIFICATION

NEW YORK AND LONDON

1851

1851

1851

CAMBRIDGE

1851

1851

DEDICATORY ADDRESS.

BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, M. D.,

President of the Association.

It is my appointed task, my honorable privilege, this evening, to speak of what has been done by others. No one can bring his tribute of words into the presence of great deeds, or try with them to embellish the memory of any inspiring achievement, without feeling and leaving with others a sense of their insufficiency. So felt Alexander when he compared even his adored Homer with the hero the poet had sung. So felt Webster when he contrasted the phrases of rhetoric with the eloquence of patriotism and of self-devotion. So felt Lincoln when on the field of Gettysburg he spoke those immortal words which Pericles could not have bettered, which Aristotle could not have criticised. So felt he who wrote the epitaph of the builder of the dome which looks down on the crosses and weathercocks that glitter over London.

We are not met upon a battle-field, except so far as every laborious achievement means a victory over opposition, indifference, selfishness, faintheartedness, and that great property of mind as well as matter, — inertia. We are not met in a cathedral, except so far as every building whose walls are lined with the products of useful and ennobling thought is a temple of the Almighty, whose inspiration has given us understanding. But we have gathered within walls which bear testimony to the self-sacrificing, persevering efforts of a few young men, to whom we owe the origin and development of all that excites our admiration in this completed enterprise; and I might consider my task as finished

if I contented myself with borrowing the last word of the architect's epitaph and only saying, Look around you!

The reports of the librarian have told or will tell you, in some detail, what has been accomplished since the 21st of December, 1874, when six gentlemen met at the house of Dr. Henry Ingersoll Bowditch to discuss different projects for a medical library. In less than four years from that time, by the liberality of associations and of individuals, this collection of nearly ten thousand volumes, of five thousand pamphlets, and of one hundred and twenty-five journals, regularly received, — all worthily sheltered beneath this lofty roof, — has come into being under our eyes. It has sprung up, as it were, in the night, like a mushroom; it stands before us in full daylight as lusty as an oak, and promising to grow and flourish in the perennial freshness of an evergreen.

To whom does our profession owe this already large collection of books, exceeded in numbers only by four or five of the most extensive medical libraries in the country, and lodged in a building so well adapted to its present needs? We will not point out individually all those younger members of the profession who have accomplished what their fathers and elder brethren had attempted and partially achieved. We need not write their names on these walls, after the fashion of those civic dignitaries who immortalize themselves on tablets of marble and gates of iron. But their contemporaries know them well, and their descendants will not forget them, — the men who first met together, the men who have given their time and their money, the faithful workers, worthy associates of the strenuous agitator who gave no sleep to his eyes, no slumber to his eyelids, until he had gained his ends; the untiring, imperturbable, tenacious, irrepressible, all-subduing agitator who neither rested nor let others rest until the success of the project was assured. If, against his injunctions, I name Dr. James Read Chadwick, it is only my revenge for his having kept me awake so often and so long while

he was urging on the undertaking in which he has been preëminently active and triumphantly successful.

We must not forget the various medical libraries which preceded this: that of an earlier period, when Boston contained about seventy regular practitioners, the collection afterwards transferred to the Boston Athenæum; the two collections belonging to the University; the Treadwell Library at the Massachusetts General Hospital; the collections of the two societies, that for Medical Improvement and that for Medical Observation; and more especially the ten thousand volumes relating to medicine belonging to our noble public city library, — too many blossoms on the tree of knowledge, perhaps, for the best fruit to ripen. But the Massachusetts Medical Society now numbers nearly four hundred members in the city of Boston. The time had arrived for a new and larger movement. There was needed a place to which every respectable member of the medical profession could obtain easy access; where, under one roof, all might find the special information they were seeking; where the latest medical intelligence should be spread out daily as the shipping news is posted on the bulletins of the exchange; where men engaged in a common pursuit could meet, surrounded by the mute oracles of science and art; where the whole atmosphere should be as full of professional knowledge as the apothecary's shop is of the odor of his medicaments. This was what the old men longed for, — the prophets and kings of the profession, who

“desired it long,
But died without the sight.”

This is what the young men and those who worked under their guidance undertook to give us. And now such a library, such a reading room, such an exchange, such an intellectual and social meeting-place, we behold a fact, plain before us. The medical profession of our city,

and, let us add, of all those neighboring places which it can reach with its iron arms, is united as never before by the *commune vinculum*, the common bond of a large, enduring, ennobling, unselfish interest. It breathes a new air of awakened intelligence. It marches abreast of the other learned professions, which have long had their extensive and valuable centralized libraries; abreast of them, but not promising to be content with that position. What glorifies a town like a cathedral? What dignifies a province like a university? What illuminates a country like its scholarship, and what is the nest that hatches scholars but a library?

The physician, some may say, is a practical man and has little use for all this book-learning. Every student has heard Sydenham's reply to Sir Richard Blackmore's question as to what books he should read, — meaning medical books. "Read Don Quixote," was his famous answer. But Sydenham himself made medical books and may be presumed to have thought *those* at least worth reading. Descartes was asked where was his library, and in reply held up the dissected body of an animal. But Descartes made books, great books, and a great many of them. A physician of common sense without erudition is better than a learned one without common sense, but the thorough master of his profession must have learning added to his natural gifts.

It is not necessary to maintain the direct practical utility of all kinds of learning. Our shelves contain many books which only a certain class of medical scholars will be likely to consult. There is a dead medical literature, and there is a live one. The dead is not all ancient, the live is not all modern. There is none, modern or ancient, which, if it has no living value for the student, will not teach him something by its autopsy. But it is with the live literature of his profession that the medical practitioner is first of all concerned.

Now there has come a great change in our time over the form in

which living thought presents itself. The first printed books — the *incunabula* — were enclosed in boards of solid oak, with brazen clasps and corners; the boards by and by were replaced by pasteboard covered with calf or sheepskin; then cloth came in and took the place of leather; then the pasteboard was covered with paper instead of cloth; and at this day the quarterly, the monthly, the weekly periodical in its flimsy unsupported dress of paper, and the daily journal, naked as it came from the womb of the press, hold the larger part of the fresh reading we live upon. We must have the latest thought in its latest expression; the page must be newly turned like the morning bannock; the pamphlet must be newly opened like the ante-prandial oyster.

Thus a library, to meet the need of our time, must take, and must spread out in a convenient form, a great array of periodicals. Our active practitioners read these by preference over almost everything else. Our specialists, more particularly, depend on the month's product, on the yearly crop of new facts, new suggestions, new contrivances, as much as the farmer on the annual yield of his acres. One of the first wants, then, of the profession is supplied by our library in its great array of periodicals from many lands in many languages. Such a number of medical periodicals no private library would have room for, no private person would pay for, or flood his library with if they were sent him for nothing. These, I think, with the reports of medical societies and the papers contributed to them, will form the most attractive part of our accumulated medical treasures. They will be also one of our chief expenses, for these journals must be bound in volumes and they require a great amount of shelf-room; all this, in addition to the cost of subscription for those which are not furnished us gratuitously.

It is true that the value of old scientific periodicals is, other things being equal, in the inverse ratio of their age, for the obvious reason that what is most valuable in the earlier volumes of a series is drained

off into the standard works with which the intelligent practitioner is supposed to be familiar. But no extended record of facts grows too old to be useful provided only that we have a ready and sure way of getting at the particular fact or facts we are in search of.

And this leads me to speak of what I conceive to be one of the principal tasks to be performed by the present and the coming generation of scholars, not only in the medical, but in every department of knowledge. I mean the formation of *indexes*, and more especially of indexes to periodical literature.

This idea has long been working in the minds of scholars, and all who have had occasion to follow out any special subject. I have a right to speak of it, for I long ago attempted to supply the want of indexes in some small measure, for my own need. I had a very complete set of the *American Journal of the Medical Sciences*; an entire set of the *North American Review*, and many volumes of the reprints of the three leading British quarterlies. Of what use were they to me without general indexes? I looked them all through carefully and made classified lists of all the articles I thought I should most care to read. But they soon outgrew my lists. The *North American Review* kept filling up shelf after shelf, rich in articles which I often wanted to consult, but what a labor to find them, until the index of Mr. Cushing, published a few months since, made the contents of these hundred and twenty volumes as easily accessible as the words in a dictionary! I had a copy of good Dr. Abraham Rees's Cyclopædia, a treasure-house to my boyhood which has not lost its value for me in later years. But where to look for what I wanted? I wished to know, for instance, what Dr. Burney had to say about singing. Who would have looked for it under the Italian word *cantare*? I was curious to learn something of the etchings of Rembrandt, and where should I find it but under the head "Low Countries, Engravers of the," — an elaborate and most val-

uable article of a hundred double-columned close-printed quarto pages, to which no reference, even, is made under the title Rembrandt. There was nothing to be done, if I wanted to know where that which I specially cared for was to be found in my Rees's Cyclopædia, but to look over every page of its forty-one quarto volumes and make out a brief list of matters of interest which I could not find by their titles, and this I did, at no small expense of time and trouble.

Nothing, therefore, could be more pleasing to me than to see the attention which has been given of late years to the great work of indexing. It is a quarter of a century since Mr. Poole published his Index to Periodical Literature, which it is much to be hoped is soon to appear in a new edition, grown as it must be to formidable dimensions by the additions of so long a period. The *British and Foreign Medical Review*, edited by the late Sir John Forbes, contributed to by Huxley, Carpenter, Laycock, and others of the most distinguished scientific men of Great Britain, has an index to its twenty-four volumes, and by its aid I find this valuable series as manageable as a lexicon. The last edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica had a complete index in a separate volume, and the publishers of Appleton's American Cyclopædia have recently issued an index to their useful work, which must greatly add to its value. I have already referred to the index to the *North American Review*, which to an American, and especially to a New Englander, is the most interesting and most valuable addition of its kind to our literary apparatus since the publication of Mr. Allibone's Dictionary of Authors. I might almost dare to parody Mr. Webster's words in speaking of Hamilton, to describe what Mr. Cushing did for the solemn rows of back volumes of our honored old *Review* which had been long fossilizing on our shelves: "He touched the dead corpse of the" *North American*, "and it sprang to its feet." A library of the best thought of the best American scholars during the greater portion of the century was brought

to light by the work of the index-maker as truly as were the Assyrian tablets by the labors of Layard.

A great portion of the best writing and reading—literary, scientific, professional, miscellaneous—comes to us now, at stated intervals, in paper covers. The writer appears, as it were, in his shirt-sleeves. As soon as he has delivered his message the book-binder puts a coat on his back, and he joins the forlorn brotherhood of “back volumes,” than which, so long as they are unindexed, nothing can be more exasperating. Who wants a lock without a key, a ship without a rudder, a binnacle without a compass, a check without a signature, a greenback without a goldback behind it?

I have referred chiefly to the medical journals, but I would include with these the reports of medical associations, and those separate publications which, coming in the form of pamphlets, heap themselves into chaotic piles and bundles which are worse than useless, taking up a great deal of room, and frightening everything away but mice and mousing antiquarians, or possibly at long intervals some terebrating specialist.

Arranged, bound, indexed, all these at once become accessible and valuable. I will take the first instance which happens to suggest itself. How many who know all about osteoblasts and the experiments of Ollier, and all that has grown out of them, know where to go for a paper by the late Dr. A. L. Peirson, of Salem, published in the year 1840, under the modest title, *Remarks on Fractures*? And if any practitioner who has to deal with broken bones does *not* know that most excellent and practical essay, it is a great pity, for it answers very numerous questions which will be sure to suggest themselves to the surgeon and the patient as no one of the recent treatises, on my own shelves, at least, can do.

But if indexing is the special need of our time in medical literature, as in every department of knowledge, it must be remembered that it is not only an immense labor, but one that never ends. It requires there-

fore the coöperation of a large number of individuals to do the work, and a large amount of money to pay for making its results public through the press. When it is remembered that the catalogue of the library of the British Museum is contained in nearly three thousand large folios of manuscript, and not all its books are yet included, the task of indexing any considerable branch of science or literature looks as if it were well nigh impossible. But many hands make light work. An "Index Society" has been formed in England, already numbering about one hundred and seventy members. It aims at "supplying thorough indexes to valuable works and collections which have hitherto lacked them; at issuing indexes to the literature of special subjects; and at gathering materials for a general reference index." This society has published a little treatise setting forth the history and the art of indexing, which I trust is in the hands of some of our members, if not upon our shelves.

Something has been done in the same direction by individuals in our own country, as we have already seen. The need of it in the department of medicine is beginning to be clearly felt. Our library has already an admirable catalogue with cross references, the work of a number of its younger members coöperating in the task. A very intelligent medical student, Mr. William D. Chapin, whose excellent project is endorsed by well-known New York physicians and professors, proposes to publish a yearly index to original communications in the medical journals of the United States, classified by authors and subjects. But it is from the National Medical Library at Washington that we have the best promise and the largest expectations. That great and growing collection of fifty thousand volumes is under the eye and hand of a librarian who knows books and how to manage them. For libraries are the standing armies of civilization, and an army is but a mob without a general who can organize and marshal it so as to make it effective. The "Specimen

Fasciculus of a Catalogue of the National Medical Library," prepared under the direction of Dr. Billings, the librarian, would have excited the admiration of Haller, the master scholar in medical science of the last century, or rather of the profession in all centuries, and if carried out as it is begun will be to the nineteenth all and more than all that the three Bibliothecæ — Anatomica, Chirurgica, and Medicinæ-Practicæ — were to the eighteenth century. I cannot forget the story that Agassiz was so fond of telling of the king of Prussia and Fichte. It was after the humiliation and spoliation of the kingdom by Napoleon that the monarch asked the philosopher what could be done to regain the lost position of the nation. "Found a great university, Sire," was the answer, and so it was that in the year 1810 the world-renowned University of Berlin came into being. I believe that *we* in this country can do better than found a national university, whose professors shall be nominated in caucuses, go in and out, perhaps, like postmasters, with every change of administration, and deal with science in the face of their constituency as the courtier did with time when his sovereign asked him what o'clock it was: "Whatever hour your majesty pleases." But when we have a noble library like that at Washington, and a librarian of exceptional qualifications like the gentleman who now holds that office, I believe that a liberal appropriation by Congress to carry out a conscientious work for the advancement of sound knowledge and the bettering of human conditions, like this which Dr. Billings has so well begun, would redound greatly to the honor of the nation. It ought to be willing to be at some charge to make its treasures useful to its citizens, and, for its own sake, especially to that class which has charge of health public and private. This country abounds in what are called "self-made men," and is justly proud of many whom it thus designates. In one sense no man is self-made who breathes the air of a civilized community. In another sense every man who is anything other than a phonograph on legs is self-

made. But if we award his just praise to the man who has attained any kind of excellence without having had the same advantages as others whom, nevertheless, he has equalled or surpassed, let us not be betrayed into undervaluing the mechanic's careful training to his business, — the thorough and laborious education of the scholar and the professional man.

Our American atmosphere is vocal with the flippant loquacity of half knowledge. We must accept whatever good can be got out of it, and keep it under as we do sorrel and mullein and witchgrass, by enriching the soil, and sowing good seed in plenty; by good teaching and good books, rather than by wasting our time in talking against it. Half knowledge dreads nothing but whole knowledge.

I have spoken of the importance and the predominance of periodical literature, and have attempted to do justice to its value. But the almost exclusive reading of it is not without its dangers. The journals contain much that is crude and unsound; the presumption, it might be maintained, is against their novelties, unless they come from observers of established credit. Yet I have known a practitioner — perhaps more than one — who was as much under the dominant influence of the last article he had read in his favorite medical journal as a milliner under the sway of the last fashion-plate. The difference between green and seasoned knowledge is very great, and such practitioners never hold long enough to any of their knowledge to have it get seasoned.

It is needless to say, then, that all the substantial and permanent literature of the profession should be represented upon our shelves. Much of it is there already, and as one private library after another falls into this by the natural law of gravitation, it will gradually acquire all that is most valuable almost without effort. A scholar should not be in a hurry to part with his books. They are probably more valuable to him than they can be to any other individual. What Swedenborg

called "correspondence" has established itself between his intelligence and the volumes which wall him within their sacred enclosure. Napoleon said that his mind was as if furnished with drawers,—he drew out each as he wanted its contents, and closed it at will when done with them. The scholar's mind, to use a similar comparison, is furnished with shelves, like his library. Each book knows its place in the brain as well as against the wall or in the alcove. His consciousness is doubled by the books which encircle him, as the trees that surround a lake repeat themselves in its unruffled waters. Men talk of the nerve that runs to the pocket, but one who loves his books, and has lived long with them, has a nervous filament which runs from his sensorium to every one of them. Or, if I may still let my fancy draw its pictures, a scholar's library is to him what a temple is to the worshipper who frequents it. There is the altar sacred to his holiest experiences. There is the font where his new-born thought was baptized and first had a name in his consciousness. There is the monumental tablet of a dead belief, sacred still in the memory of what it was while yet alive. No visitor can read all this on the lettered backs of the books that have gathered around the scholar, but for him, from the Aldus on the lowest shelf to the Elzevir on the highest, every volume has a language which none but he can interpret. Be patient with the book-collector who loves his companions too well to let them go. Books are not buried with their owners, and the veriest book-miser that ever lived was probably doing far more for his successors than his more liberal neighbor who despised his learned or unlearned avarice. Let the fruit fall with the leaves still clinging round it. Who would have stripped Southey's walls of the books that filled them, when, his mind no longer capable of taking in their meaning, he would still pat and fondle them with the vague loving sense of what they had once been to him—to him, the great scholar, now like a little child among his playthings?

We need in this country not only the scholar, but the *virtuoso*, who hoards the treasures which he loves, it may be chiefly for their rarity and because others who know more than he does of their value set a high price upon them. As the wine of old vintages is gently decanted out of its cobwebbed bottles with their rotten corks into clean new receptacles, so the wealth of the New World is quietly emptying many of the libraries and galleries of the Old World into its newly formed collections and newly raised edifices. And this process must go on in an accelerating ratio. No Englishman will be offended if I say that before the New Zealander takes his stand on a broken arch of London bridge to sketch the ruins of Saint Paul's in the midst of a vast solitude, the treasures of the British Museum will have found a new shelter in the halls of New York or Boston. No Catholic will think hardly of my saying that before the Coliseum falls, and with it the imperial city, whose doom prophecy has linked with that of the almost eternal amphitheatre, the marbles, the bronzes, the paintings, the manuscripts of the Vatican will have left the shores of the Tiber for those of the Potomac, the Hudson, the Mississippi, or the Sacramento. And what a delight in the pursuit of the rarities which the eager book-hunter follows with the scent of a beagle! Shall I ever forget that rainy day in Lyons, that dingy bookshop, where I found the Aëtius, long missing from my *Artis Medicæ Principes*, and where I bought for a small pecuniary consideration, though it was marked *rare*, and was really *très rare*, the Aphorisms of Hippocrates, edited by and with a preface from the hand of Francis Rabelais? And the vellum-bound Tulpius, which I came upon in Venice, afterwards my only reading when imprisoned in quarantine at Marseilles, so that the two hundred and twenty-eight cases he has recorded are, many of them, to this day still fresh in my memory. And the Schenckius, — the folio filled with *casus rariores*, which had strayed in among the rubbish of the bookstall on the boulevard, — and

the noble old Vesalius with its grand frontispiece not unworthy of Titian, and the fine old Ambroise Paré, long waited for even in Paris and long ago, and the colossal Spigelius with his eviscerated beauties, and Dutch Bidloo with its miracles of fine engraving and bad dissection, and Italian Mascagni, the despair of all would-be imitators, and pre-Adamite John de Ketam, and antediluvian Berengarius Carpensis — but why multiply names, every one of which brings back the accession of a book which was an event almost like the birth of an infant?

A library like ours must exercise the largest hospitality. A great many books may be found in every large collection which remind us of those apostolic looking old men who figure on the platform at our political and other assemblages. Some of them have spoken words of wisdom in their day, but they have ceased to be oracles; some of them never had any particularly important message for humanity, but they add dignity to the meeting by their presence; they look wise, whether they are so or not, and no one grudges them their places of honor. Venerable figure-heads, what would our platforms be without you?

Just so with our libraries. Without their rows of folios in creamy vellum or showing their black backs with antique lettering of tarnished gold our shelves would look as insufficient and unbalanced as a column without its base, as a statue without its pedestal. And do not think they are kept only to be spanked and dusted during that dreadful period when their owner is but too thankful to become an exile and a wanderer from the scene of single combats between dead authors and living housemaids. Men were not all cowards before Agamemnon or all fools before the days of Virchow and Billroth. And apart from any practical use to be derived from the older medical authors, is there not a true pleasure in reading the accounts of great discoverers in their own words? I do not pretend to hoist up the *Bibliotheca Anatomica* of Mangetus and spread it on my table every day. I do not get out my

great Albinus before every lecture on the muscles, nor disturb the majestic repose of Vesalius every time I speak of the bones he has so admirably described and figured. But it does please me to read the first descriptions of parts to which the names of their discoverers or those who have first described them have become so joined that not even modern science can part them; to listen to the talk of my old volume as Willis describes his circle and Fallopius his aqueduct and Varolius his bridge and Eustachius his tube and Monro his foramen — all so well known to us in the human body; it does please me to know the very words in which Winslow described the opening which bears his name, and Glisson his capsule and De Graaf his vesicle; I am not content until I know in what language Harvey announced his discovery of the circulation, and how Spigelius made the liver his perpetual memorial, and Malpighi found a monument more enduring than brass in the corpuscles of the spleen and the kidney.

But after all, the readers who care most for the early records of medical science and art are the specialists who are dividing up the practice of medicine and surgery as they were parcelled out, according to Herodotus, by the Egyptians. For them nothing is too old, nothing is too new, for to their books of all others is applicable the saying of D'Alembert that the author kills himself in lengthening out what the reader kills himself in trying to shorten.

There are practical books among these ancient volumes which can never grow old. Would you know how to recognize "male hysteria" and to treat it, take down your Sydenham; would you read the experience of a physician who was himself the subject of asthma and who, notwithstanding that, in the words of Dr. Johnson, "panted on till ninety," you will find it in the venerable treatise of Sir John Floyer; would you listen to the story of the King's Evil cured by the royal touch, as told by a famous surgeon who fully believed in it, go to

Wiseman; would you get at first hand the description of the spinal disease which long bore his name, do not be startled if I tell you to go to Pott — to Percival Pott, the great surgeon of the last century.

There comes a time for every book in a library when it is wanted by somebody. It is but a few weeks since one of the most celebrated physicians in the country wrote to me from a great centre of medical education to know if I had the works of Sanctorius, which he had tried in vain to find. I could have lent him the "*Medicina Statica*," with its frontispiece showing Sanctorius with his dinner on the table before him, in his balanced chair which sunk with him below the level of his banquet-board when he had swallowed a certain number of ounces, — an early foreshadowing of Pettenkofer's chamber and quantitative physiology, — but the "*Opera Omnia*" of Sanctorius I had never met with, and I fear he had to do without it.

I would extend the hospitality of these shelves to a class of works which we are in the habit of considering as being outside of the pale of medical science, properly so called, and sometimes of coupling with a disrespectful name. Such has always been my own practice. I have welcomed Culpeper and Salmon to my bookcase as willingly as Dioscorides or Quincy, or Paris or Wood and Bache. I have found a place for St. John Long, and read the story of his trial for manslaughter with as much interest as the laurel-water case in which John Hunter figured as a witness. I would give Samuel Hahnemann a place by the side of Samuel Thomson. Am I not afraid that some student of imaginative turn and not provided with the needful cerebral strainers without which all the refuse of gimcrack intelligences gets into the mental drains and chokes them up, — am I not afraid that some such student will get hold of the "*Organon*" or the "*Maladies Chroniques*" and be won over by their delusions, and so be lost to those that love him as a man of common sense and a brother in their high calling? Not in the least. If

he showed any symptoms of infection I would for once have recourse to the principle of *similia similibus*. To cure him of Hahnemann I would prescribe my favorite homœopathic antidote, Okie's Bonninghausen. If that failed, I would order Grauvogl as a heroic remedy, and if he survived that uncured, I would give him my blessing, if I thought him honest, and bid him depart in peace. For me he is no longer an individual. He belongs to a class of minds which we are bound to be patient with if their Maker sees fit to indulge them with existence. We must accept the conjuring ultra-ritualist, the dreamy second adventist, the erratic spiritualist, the fantastic homœopathist, as not unworthy of philosophic study; not more unworthy of it than the squarers of the circle and the inventors of perpetual motion, and the other whimsical visionaries to whom De Morgan has devoted his most instructive and entertaining "Budget of Paradoxes." I hope, therefore, that our library will admit the works of the so-called Eclectics, of the Thomsonians, if any are in existence, of the Clairvoyants, if they have a literature, and especially of the Homœopathists. This country seems to be the place for such a collection, which will by and by be curious and of more value than at present, for Homœopathy seems to be following the pathological law of erysipelas, fading out where it originated as it spreads to new regions. At least I judge so by the following translated extract from a criticism of an American work in the *Homœopatische Rundschau* of Leipzig for October, 1878, which I find in the *Homœopathic Bulletin* for the month of November just passed:—

"While we feel proud of the spread and rise of Homœopathy across the ocean, and while the Homœopathic works reaching us from there, and published in a style such as is unknown in Germany, bear eloquent testimony to the eminent activity of our transatlantic colleagues, we are overcome by sorrowful regrets at the position Homœopathy occupies in

Germany. Such a work [as the American one referred to] with us would be impossible ; it would lack the necessary support."

By all means let our library secure a good representation of the literature of Homœopathy before it leaves us its "sorrowful regrets" and migrates with its sugar of milk pellets, which have taken the place of the old *pilulæ micæ panis*, to Alaska, to "Nova Zembla, or the Lord knows where."

What shall I say in this presence of the duties of a Librarian? Where have they ever been better performed than in our own public city library, where the late Mr. Jewett and the living Mr. Winsor have shown us what a librarian ought to be — the organizing head, the vigilant guardian, the seeker's index, the scholar's counsellor? His work is not merely that of administration, manifold and laborious as its duties are. He must have a quick intelligence and a retentive memory. He is a public carrier of knowledge in its germs. His office is like that which naturalists attribute to the bumble-bee, — he lays up little honey for himself, but he conveys the fertilizing pollen from flower to flower.

Our undertaking, just completed — and just begun — has come at the right time, not a day too soon. Our practitioners need a library like this, for with all their skill and devotion there is too little genuine erudition, such as a liberal profession ought to be able to claim for many of its members. In reading the recent obituary notices of the late Dr. Geddings of South Carolina, I recalled what our lamented friend Dr. Coale used to tell me of his learning and accomplishments, and I could not help reflecting how few such medical scholars we had to show in Boston or New England. We must clear up this unilluminated atmosphere, and here, — here is the true electric light which will irradiate its darkness.

The public will catch the rays reflected from the same source of light, and it needs instruction on the great subjects of health and disease, —

needs it sadly. It is preyed upon by every kind of imposition almost without hindrance. Its ignorance and prejudices react upon the profession to the great injury of both. The jealous feeling, for instance, with regard to such provisions for the study of anatomy as are sanctioned by the laws in this State and carried out with strict regard to those laws, threatens the welfare, if not the existence of institutions for medical instruction wherever it is not held in check by enlightened intelligence. And on the other hand the profession has just been startled by a verdict against a physician, ruinous in its amount, — enough to drive many a hard-working young practitioner out of house and home, — a verdict which leads to the fear that suits for malpractice may take the place of the panel game and child-stealing as a means of extorting money. If the profession in this State, which claims a high standard of civilization, is to be crushed and ground beneath the upper millstone of the dearth of educational advantages, and the lower millstone of ruinous penalties for what the ignorant ignorantly shall decide to be ignorance, all I can say is

God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts!

Once more, we cannot fail to see that just as astrology has given place to astronomy, so theology, the science of Him whom by searching no man can find out, is fast being replaced by what we may not improperly call theonomy, or the science of the laws according to which the Creator acts. And since these laws find their fullest manifestations for us, at least, in rational human natures, the study of anthropology is largely replacing that of scholastic divinity. We must contemplate our Maker indirectly in human attributes as we talk of Him in human parts of speech. And this gives a sacredness to the study of man in his physical, mental, moral, social, and religious nature which elevates the faithful students of anthropology to the dignity of a priesthood, and sheds a holy

light on the recorded results of their labors, brought together as they are in such a collection as this which is now spread out before us.

Thus, then, our library is a temple as truly as the dome-crowned cathedral hallowed by the breath of prayer and praise, where the dead repose and the living worship. May it, with all its treasures, be consecrated like that to the glory of God, through the contributions it shall make to the advancement of sound knowledge, to the relief of human suffering, to the promotion of harmonious relations between the members of the two noble professions which deal with the diseases of the soul and with those of the body, and to the common cause in which all good men are working, the furtherance of the well-being of their fellow creatures !

NOTE. — As an illustration of the statement in the last paragraph but one, I take the following notice from the *Boston Daily Advertiser* of December 4th, the day after the delivery of the address : —

“ Prince Lucien Bonaparte is now living in London, and is devoting himself to the work of collecting the creeds of all religions and sects, with a view to their classification, — his object being simply scientific or anthropological.”

Since delivering the address, also, I find a leading article in the *Cincinnati Lancet and Clinic* of November 30th, headed “ The Decadence of Homœopathy,” abundantly illustrated by extracts from the *Homœopathic Times*, the leading American organ of that sect.

In the New York *Medical Record* of the same date, which I had not seen before the delivery of my address, is an account of the action of the Homœopathic Medical Society of Northern New York, in which Hahnemann’s theory of “ dynamization ” is characterized in a formal resolve as “ unworthy the confidence of the Homœopathic profession.”

It will be a disappointment to the German Homœopaths to read in the *Homœopathic Times* such a statement as the following : —

“ Whatever the influences have been which have checked the outward development of Homœopathy, it is plainly evident that the Homœopathic school, as regards the number of its openly avowed representatives, has attained its majority, and has begun to decline both in this country and in England.”

All which is an additional reason for making a collection of the incredibly curious literature of Homœopathy before that pseudological inanity has faded out like so many other delusions.

REPORT OF THE BUILDING COMMITTEE.

BY DR. CHARLES P. PUTNAM, CHAIRMAN.

THE lot on which this building stands is twenty-seven and one half feet broad and sixty feet deep. The original house, which was formerly occupied by the late Dr. Howe, extended to the first beam in the ceiling west of the skylight. To obtain this hall, the first floor was removed together with that part of the rear wall of the house which corresponded to the two lower stories; a strong iron beam was carried across to support the upper part of the rear wall, and the yard was roofed over. The hall thus covers the whole lot, and is eighteen and one half feet high.

The excellent results obtained here and in the rooms above testify to the skill and taste of our architect, Mr. Henry Van Brunt. The arrangement of seats at the west end of the hall on grades not only makes it easier to see from that end, but gives room below for a steam furnace, a coal bin, and four large air-boxes, arranged to admit any proportion of hot and cold air. Almost the whole of the wall is lined with books, the upper parts being made accessible for this purpose by a gallery carried round three sides, which also serves to accommodate a considerable number of seats. The gallery is reached by a few steps from the rear platform, and by the circular staircase on the north side. This staircase also serves to connect the hall directly with the reading-rooms above. Your attention is particularly called to the admirable arrangements for heating and ventilation. The plan consists in general of admitting a large volume of air over steam-pipes at the west end of the room, and carrying it off through a large ventilating shaft at the east end. A strong draught is maintained in this shaft by a simple appliance, of which I will speak again later. We

can have our air enter at any desired temperature, for by a system of valves it may be carried through or over the steam-pipes. The openings into the room are in the risers of the grades under the seats. From there the air is intended to be diffused gradually over the room, but to have a general direction toward the east end.

This plan was submitted to Dr. Edward Cowles, of the Boston City Hospital, by whom the proper areas of the openings for admitting and discharging the air were calculated. Dr. J. S. Billings, of the United States army, who honors us with his presence to night, also examined the plans, and suggested a few modifications. We are much indebted to these two gentlemen for the attention they gave the matter, and for their valuable advice. The air entering the room is intended to move at the rate of two feet per second. Air moving at a greater rate than this might be felt as a draught. The cold air shafts have an area of about twenty-seven square feet, and will therefore admit about two hundred thousand cubic feet of air per hour.

Except on the present occasion, the hall will rarely contain more than one hundred and fifty persons, — more often only one hundred, — so that each person will have from twelve hundred to two thousand cubic feet per hour of fresh air. The hall contains about twenty-two thousand cubic feet, and all the air will therefore be changed more than nine times in an hour, or once in five or six minutes. The ventilating shaft has an area of sixteen feet, in which the air is expected to have a rate of three feet per second. The openings into it are under and behind the platform. This shaft, which can be seen behind the desk, leads into a space between two sky-lights, the lower of which is of ground glass and forms a panel in the ceiling, while another shaft leads from the enclosed space into the open air. The twenty-eight gas jets which mainly light the room are placed in this space, the heat from them insuring a strong upward current di-

rectly from near the floor of the hall. In order to lose as little light as possible, reflectors are projected over the gas jets in this ventilating lantern at night. In the day-time they are let down out of the way, and the hall is abundantly lighted by the sky-light and the two windows on Boylston Place. If the hall should become too hot during a meeting in summer, or in any weather, one or more of the sashes in the sky-light may be lowered in such a way as to let off the hot air freely from the top of the room, and at the same time to shield the eyes of the spectators from the glare of the lights.

The second story of the house is to be used for reading-rooms. The back room contains current journals and books of reference; while a duplicate library for home reading will soon be placed upon the shelves of the front room. The third story contains two large rooms, one of which might be used for a committee room, or be let to some society, while the other may perhaps be devoted to the use of medical students. A small room on the same floor will be used as a duplicate room.

The top story is occupied by the assistant librarian, Dr. E. H. Brigham, and his family. Great pains have been taken to make the building practically fire-proof. Among other things party walls have been built up on both sides above the roofs.

We should be glad to say that we were free from pecuniary incumbrance. But this is hardly to be expected of a library that has grown as rapidly as ours has. We could no longer remain in our rooms in Hamilton Place; the shelves were crowded, and the floor was obstructed with piles of books, and beside these about three thousand volumes were waiting to come in. Moreover, the means of protection against fire were inadequate. It was plain that the library had outgrown its old quarters, and had earned the right to new and larger ones. Last spring we asked members of the society and their

friends to give us enough money to justify us in buying and altering this house. Very generous donations were given to us, amounting to over \$8000. The house is mortgaged for \$8000, but the interest on this will be more than met by the rents received from the medical societies for the use of the hall. There is also a floating debt of almost \$4000, which ought to be paid off as soon as possible.

We confidently believe that a large part of this sum will be subscribed by the members of the association, but we hope that they will also be able to interest those of their friends who are willing to lend a helping hand to the cause of medical education. We are encouraged to ask for more money by the fact that our former appeal was so generously met. We have hitherto not made anything like a public appeal for money, because we wanted first to have something tangible to show for which it should be employed. Now we invite you to examine the library and see if it is worth assisting. Most of the subscriptions that have been received up to this time have been quite large, but we would not have it supposed that any sums, even the smallest, will not be thankfully received.

REMARKS OF DR. JOHN S. BILLINGS, U. S. A., LIBRARIAN OF THE
NATIONAL LIBRARY IN WASHINGTON, D. C.

I appreciate very highly the privilege of being present at this meeting, as well as the honor of being called on to address such an assemblage, and I shall prove that appreciation by being very brief in my remarks. I had the pleasure of hearing the first report of your librarian, and the progress of your collection shows that you need no advice that I can give. You have already reached that stage of development when you are having practical experience of the truth of that maxim which should be always in the mind of the librarian, namely, "Unto him that hath shall be given," and are close on the

period when a new set of difficulties will arise, being those pertaining to collections of ten thousand volumes and upwards.

I think I can best occupy the few moments which I propose to take by telling you something of the rise and progress of the Medical Library at Washington, of which I have charge. This library is now about thirteen years old; it contains about forty-eight thousand volumes and the same number of pamphlets, and is one of the best working medical collections in the world. This growth has been due to purchases, to exchanges, and last, but by no means least, to the liberality and public spirit of many members of the medical profession of this country, whose contributions have been large and numerous. To secure these contributions, however, requires in most cases personal application, and I used to search for them on upper shelves and in the closets and garrets of physicians with great success. As one of these book-hunting expeditions may have had some influence in the formation of this library, a brief account of it may be of interest. About three years ago, while in Boston upon one of these raids, I found myself in the library of a physician who had recently returned from Europe, where he had made a collection of books and pamphlets relating to the specialty which he proposed to practice. Among these I observed some old and rare books which I ventured to hint "were peculiarly desirable for the Washington library, where they would be acceptable and be of use to all physicians of the country," etc., etc. The works were promptly placed in my hands, and the doctor proceeded to ransack his shelves, handing down book after book, and asking "if the library had that," or "if it ought not to have that," until a pile had accumulated which actually made me hesitate and feel some embarrassment in accepting, — although by dint of practice I had even at that time acquired a very respectable amount of assurance in such matters. I am glad to say, however, that I allowed no signs of my

embarrassment to appear, but succeeded in looking as if matters were merely taking their usual and expected course, and that I carried off everything I could lay my hands on.

From the accounts of the growth of this library, which I have heard to-night, and from the number of books which I see upon its shelves, I feel sure that the example which I then set has been faithfully followed, and that your librarian has never forgotten the lesson which must have been strongly impressed upon him as he saw his treasures disappearing.

On another occasion, however, I met with a cruel disappointment. On going into a physician's office I found a fine large book-case with glass doors, behind which appeared a goodly series of volumes in paper covers, neatly lettered on the back, and on examining the titles I found that they included complete series of some of the rarest of our medical journals, — a class of publications which I have been specially anxious to secure, — and that in fact there were three journals of which I had never even heard the names. The book-case was locked, and I eagerly requested of the doctor that he would open it and let me see these treasures, telling him that I *must* have them. He was very reluctant to comply, did not know where the key was, etc., but finally opened the case, and explained to me that a friend of his who was a member of Congress had sent him a large number of copies of Patent Office reports and diplomatic correspondence, and that these, neatly covered and labeled, had served to give his book-case such an attractive appearance.

I have been often asked how many medical books we have yet to procure in order to make our library complete, and as it must be presumed that you also are aiming at perfection some data on this point may be of interest. Counting each work as one, regardless of the number of editions it may have passed through, I think that of med-

ical books which ought to be in our national medical collection we have about one half. We can usually furnish the originals for seventy-five per cent. of the references given in modern medical works and bibliographies, and this is due to the fact that a large proportion of such references is always to articles in periodicals, and that we have succeeded in obtaining over eighty per cent. of all the medical journals and transactions which have been published throughout the world.

So much has been said by the medical press within the last year or two about our index catalogue that I presume you are all familiar with its scope. Up to the evening of November 30th we had indexed the original articles in 13,901 volumes of journals, 3293 volumes of transactions, and 725 volumes of sanitary and hospital reports and miscellaneous, — in all 17,919 volumes. We are receiving at the present time, and regularly indexing before placing them on the files, 372 medical journals and 201 series of medical transactions, and in addition to these we receive about 140 journals and 100 series of transactions, which are partially indexed.

It is to be hoped that when, a hundred years hence, your librarian makes out his centennial report, he will be able to congratulate you on the fact that there has been a decided diminution in the quantity of this class of publications during the century, and at the same time may be able to report that, with one exception, the most complete and useful medical library in the world is that of the Boston Medical Library Association.

REMARKS OF MR. JUSTIN WINSOR, LIBRARIAN OF HARVARD
UNIVERSITY.

It gives me pleasure to listen to the remarks of Dr. Billings, for I regard him as the greatest medical bibliographer in this or any other country. If there is any one thing which entitles managers of

libraries to a place in the ranks of those who pursue a science, it is their coöperation with students. In former days the merchant went home late at night, because he was kept by the necessity of making up reports for his foreign correspondents; now he goes home at four P. M., certain that all news of importance will be ticked across the ocean by one man for all men. Such may be said to be the relation of the librarian to students. His part is to open the way which they wish to follow. The collection of medical works in the Public Library amounts to perhaps 10,000 volumes, to which should be added cognate works on chemistry, etc. This will increase the number to 12,000 or 13,000. It seems quite unwise to have two independent collections so near each other, when a passage might connect them. I cannot yet point out the details of the desired coöperation, but I think that the time will come when the two libraries and that of the Medical School will be brought into intimate relations. This matter I commend to the librarian of the Public Library, to the dean of the Medical School, and to the president of Harvard University.

REMARKS OF DR. GEORGE H. LYMAN, PRESIDENT OF MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY.

I am quite aware that nothing which I can say will add to the interest of this occasion, but as the representative of the Massachusetts Medical Society I must at least acknowledge the compliment which you pay it, and assure you of its cordial sympathy in your objects. It would, indeed, after the address to which we have all listened with so much pleasure, be impertinent in me to enlarge upon the value to the medical profession and to the community at large of just such an institution as this. It is so manifestly desirable that every available means for the dissemination of sound medical knowledge should be developed, that we need not fear that any one will question its importance.

The grand old society which it is my privilege to represent here has from its very inception made the diffusion of medical literature one of its chief objects. Among the earliest endeavors of that little band of distinguished men who a century ago associated themselves to elevate the character of the profession, to systematize and render productive the scattered medical knowledge of that day, was the formation of a medical library. Their records show constant effort in this direction. In 1786 they voted twenty pounds from their limited resources for the purchase of books; in 1789, thirty pounds; and so on. It must be admitted that these were large grants when we consider the paucity of their numbers and the value of lawful money in those times. From the beginning they gave their attention to essays upon the laws of epidemics, and to new discoveries in the pathology and treatment of disease. As early as 1791 they had accumulated sufficient material to justify the publication of their first volume of *Communications*, and like dutiful children they voted two copies, "in the best blue binding," to the maternal library at Harvard. As medical knowledge increased and the press became more fertile, the time gradually arrived when every intelligent physician had his own more or less abundant library of standard books for convenient reference, and the society gradually and wisely limited its efforts to the republication of a few encyclopædic and periodical works for general distribution, until finally, and quite recently, its own previous accumulations by gift and purchase were, for the want of just such an institution as this, turned over to the Public Library, where the quaint old literature of past generations may be consulted by such antiquarians as can find pleasure or profit therein.

In conclusion, Mr. President, let me claim that which I am sure this audience will grant, — that this young and vigorous enterprise is one of the legitimate outgrowths from the past teachings and influence

of the Massachusetts Medical Society, for it is only through its education of medical men that such an institution has been made possible. Now that you have so happily shown the way to wider effort, I would predict that its influence and means will be gladly and liberally at your service as opportunity may offer.

REMARKS OF CHARLES W. ELIOT, LL. D., PRESIDENT OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

For two hundred years Harvard College has been trying to do its part in educating the community; and its sympathies with all efforts in that direction have been and are unflinching. It is with great delight that I see the success and vigor of this library, which in professional character resembles the Social Law Library and the General Theological Library; it is also of great interest to the university's medical school. All will agree with me that teachers should have ready access to books. Yesterday a rule was adopted at the Cambridge library to the effect that professors should have the first claim to books. I commend the rule to this association. I hope that medical students also will have access to the library, and think that an arrangement can be made between the association and the Medical School which will be beneficial to both. I see in this library association an example of the true American method of self-reliant and independent action without governmental interference or help. In Massachusetts the profession is protected by the State Medical Society, an organization of the profession itself. So is this library a creation of the profession for its own advancement.

REMARKS OF DR. DAVID P. SMITH, OF SPRINGFIELD, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY.

I offer my warmest congratulations to the founders and managers of this library, and beg that the benefits of the associations be extended

to the whole State. I hope that branch libraries may be established in the principal cities, so that to some extent the members of the profession throughout the State may be reached. A hall and reading-rooms like these I should regard as a medical club-house. It will create a unity in the profession, — a common interest. I trust that such will be the result, for we all need to have the elbow touched by comrade true. And with regard to the community, it should be impressed upon us that we are not so much its servants as its leaders. We must be taught to take a higher place in our own estimation.

REMARKS OF DR. HENRY I. BOWDITCH, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE
MEDICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, EX-PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

When Dr. Chadwick informed me, a few days since, that the committee of arrangements, during my absence from the city, had decided that I should make some remarks at the close of this meeting, and that they had printed the programme to that effect, I was inclined to protest, and I asked, "What can I say that will not be better said by the men who will precede me?"

On reflection it occurred to me that there were two subjects I could speak of, one of which, if alluded to at all, would not probably be urged as I, from my own experience, might press it upon your consideration, and the other topic I knew could be known only to a few individuals, now present.

The first suggestion that I have to make is that not only the medical profession but the laity owe an immense debt of gratitude to our young professional associates, by whose energy and taste this convenient building has been obtained and this beautiful auditorium, with its adjacent rooms for study, has been prepared.

During my professional life I have often thought upon and constantly desired to see a medical library, founded and sustained by physicians and by generous lay benefactors, as this has been up to the

present hour, and I trust will be by the same parties through all future time. Hereafter *preventive medicine* will be one of the great objects of interesting study ; and this branch of our profession calls loudly on the laity, as well as on ourselves, for active and cordial support.

I have desired the establishment of such a library, because I felt sure that a comprehensive plan like this present one, capable of indefinite expansion, would tend to cement the union and increase the generous culture of the whole profession of Massachusetts, and thereby greatly benefit all the people therein. I know from personal experience the obstacles which have been met by these gentlemen who have thus far carried forward this undertaking. I have admired the tact and ability with which they have overcome opposition, and I now feel disposed to thank them most heartily, not merely for myself, but for the community at large, for the profession of the present day and that of the far future. I can without hesitation call upon the profession and the laity still further to aid them, not only by gifts during life, but by special codicils to wills now made, or hereafter to be made, by any now present, or by those who, though now absent, may hereafter read of our doings on this occasion.

Twice in my life have I known efforts of this kind to be made. Twice I have seen them fail of perfect accomplishment. It is true that the first effort established the journal and pamphlet collection of the Boston Society for Medical Observation, which now forms such a thriving part of this library. The second attempt was in the Suffolk District Medical Society. The matter was referred to a committee, and the effort failed wholly, and upon the ground that the Public Library of the city could do more for the purchase and care of medical works than the profession could do for itself. I deemed that decision a great mistake. But I see now that we needed the young scientific zeal of the present day to inaugurate the great work.

The second topic to which I shall draw your attention is the history of a gift which I propose to make to the library association at the close of this meeting. I am happy to think that it will be the first gift received subsequent to this inauguration. I would fain place it, with all its fair associations, as one of the aids to a high-toned humanity, which I trust will always pervade and preside over this spot. You will, I feel sure, pardon a few allusions I am compelled to make to my private professional experience, inasmuch as I can hardly give a plain history of the gift without such reference.

Some years ago, in the early part of the late civil war, a man entered my study livid and panting, evidently suffering from severe thoracic disease. I saw at a glance and after he had spoken a single word, that he was a German gentleman, and I soon perceived that he was a man of ability and learning; but his dress was indicative of poverty. He was attended by a most devoted wife, who was an American. I became much interested in and attached to him before his death, which took place within a few weeks from his first visit to me. Some time after his death, I was requested by his widow to take charge of certain valuable documents during her absence as a nurse among the Union soldiers, to which duty she had patriotically volunteered. Among these papers were the genealogical table of her husband's family and two *Stammbücher* or books of autographs, collected by one of his lineal ancestors, who was living between 1610 and 1626. I then discovered that my friend and patient was descended of a noble family, founded in 1386. He had become disgusted with the tyrannies and ceremonies and castes of Europe, and had come to this country as one in which he had heard, and hoped to find, that there was no caste, and that liberty prevailed everywhere. He had brought these books as precious heir-looms. Unfortunately, when he arrived here, slavery ruled supreme throughout the land. Fugi-

tive slave bills were in full operation. Even Massachusetts herself bowed her neck. He must have seen all this.

Of course, his sanguine hopes were soon blasted; straitened means also began to press upon him. Seeking an honorable independence, he went into the country and became the chemist of a factory, with a small annual salary. While in this position he fell ill, and consulted me. I looked over the volumes (they lie here before me) with great interest, and found the names of not a few men famous in their day. But to my delight as a physician, I found an autograph by Fabricius Hildanus, written October 12, 1626, that is two hundred and fifty-two years ago, and as plainly to be read now as if written yesterday. It had been given to the ancestor of my patient. That ancestor had been a student at several of the great universities of Europe (Heidelberg, Jena, Strasbourg, Erfurt, Tübingen, etc.). He had also travelled in Europe, and had resided in Paris during a part of the brilliant epoch when Richelieu governed France. During these many years the youth had been able to obtain autographs from all classes, from princes with their illuminated coats of arms, professors of universities, pastors of churches, great writers, etc., down to the boon companions of student life. In 1626 he seems to have visited Berne. At that time Fabricius Hildanus resided there,—one of the great men of our profession, called by some the “father of German surgery,” as Paré is styled the father of French, and Hunter of English surgery. Not that I would compare Hildanus, in native power or historic fame, with either of his two great professional associates. John Hunter, especially, looms far above either of the others, as the great pioneer and prophet of all modern scientific thought. Nevertheless, considering the fame of Hildanus and his relation to Germany, his autograph became in my eyes a most precious relic. The motto contains a great truth: “Vivit sine

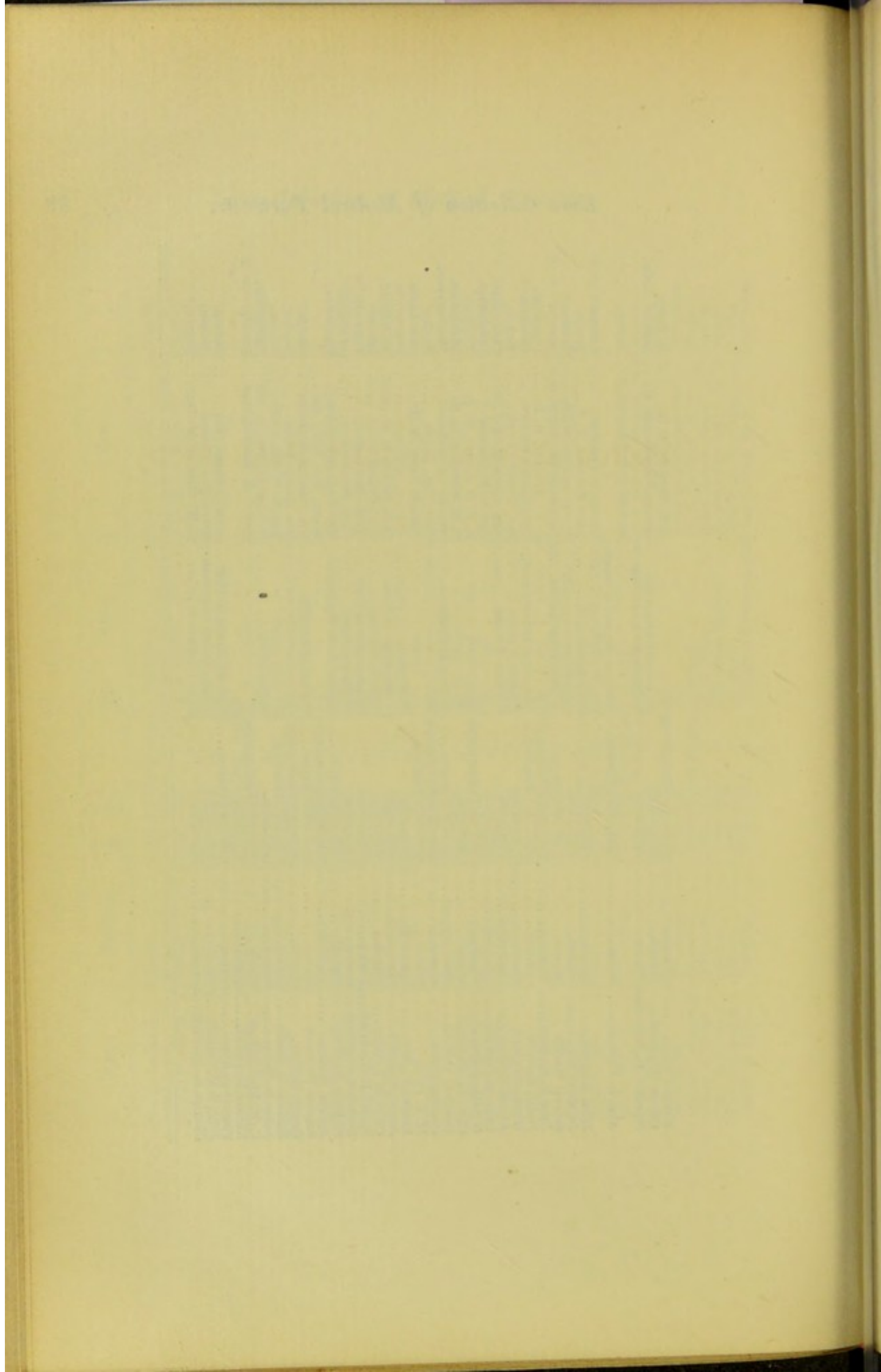
medico sed non sine medicina qui temperatam vivit vitam." You may ask how I obtained lawful possession of it. I received it from the widow of the scholar. I had expressed to her a great desire to have it in case she felt at liberty to take it from the volume. I promised to keep it most carefully, and finally to place it in some public museum. I have had it for many years safely locked up, but this seems to me the most fitting time and place to bring it forth permanently to the light.

On the back of the leaf, containing the autograph of Hildanus, is another by a professor of law, of whom all memory is now lost, if we may trust to the records contained in several cyclopædias and biographical dictionaries, which I have consulted in our city library. Nevertheless, his mottoes are excellent. At the top of the page appears the following: "Non omne quod libet, licet." And at the bottom of the same page, below the signature of the writer, are these words, which might be adopted as the motto of any honest student who may come to these quiet rooms and consult these volumes for scientific work: "In silentio et spe fortitudo mea," — "In silence and in hope is my strength." Beautiful hope! perhaps the divinest; certainly one of the most invigorating instincts vouchsafed to man. And with these words I can most fitly close.

LOAN COLLECTION
OF
MEDICAL PORTRAITS.

Loan Collection of Medical Portraits.

Edward Flint.....	Leicester.....	1789-	Oil Painting 40	-	J. S. Flint, M. D.....	Roxbury.
George Hayward.....	Boston.....	1790-1843	"	45 Francis Alexander.....	George Hayward, M. D.....	Jamaica Plain.
Solomon D. Townsend	Boston.....	1793-1869	"	51 Francis Alexander in 1844.....	Mrs. T. D. Townsend.....	Boston.
Abel L. Pearson.....	Salem.....	1794-1859	Painting...	58 Chas. Osgood of Salem, in 1853.....	Mr. C. L. Pearson.....	Boston.
John Homans.....	Boston.....	1793-1868	"	68 Wight in 1862.....	John Homans, M. D.....	Boston.
John Jeffries.....	Boston.....	1796-1876	"	55 Otis.....	B. Joy Jeffries, M. D.....	Boston.
Samuel Morrill.....	Boston.....	1796-1872	Crayon.....	60 Miss Eliza Adams.....	F. Gordon Morrill, M. D....	Boston.
John P. Spooner.....	Milton.....	1797-1878	Photograph	74 -	J. W. Spooner, M. D.....	Hingham.
Josiah Bartlett.....	Concord.....	1797-1878	Painting...	72 Ives of Detroit, Mich..	Miss Martha Bartlett.....	Concord.
Winslow Lewis.....	Boston.....	1799-1875	"	52 Abel Nichols.....	Mrs. Winslow Lewis.....	Boston.
Anson Hooker.....	Cambridge	1799-1869	"	53 Wm. Willard.....	Mrs. Anson Hooker.....	Cambridge.
Chas. F. Chaplin.....	Cambridge	1800-1857	"	-	Mrs. C. F. Chaplin.....	Cambridge.
Horatio Adams.....	Waltham.....	1801-1861	Photograph	58 -	B. F. D. Adams, M. D.....	Waltham.
Chas. H. Stedman.....	Boston.....	1804-1866	"	60 -	C. E. Stedman, M. D.....	Dorchester.
Henry C. Perkins.....	Newburyport.....	1804-1873	Crayon.....	60 Carl E. Meinerth.....	Mrs. H. C. Perkins.....	Newburyport.
Charles Mifflin.....	Boston.....	1805-1875	Photograph	66 -	Mrs. Chas. Mifflin.....	Boston.
M. S. Perry.....	Boston.....	1805-1859	Painting...	-	John G. Perry, M. D.....	New York.
Luther V. Bell.....	Somerville.....	1806-1862	"	50 Wight.....	McLean Asylum.....	New York.
James M. Smith.....	Springfield.....	1806-1853	"	-	D. P. Smith, M. D.....	Somerville.
Chas. B. Putnam.....	Boston.....	1806-1875	"	-	C. P. Putnam.....	Springfield.
Nath'l B. Shurtleiff...	Boston.....	1810-1874	"	68 E. T. Billings.....	H. G. Shurtleiff.....	Boston.
Nath'l B. Shurtleiff...	Boston.....	1810-1874	"	32 Alexander in 1843.....	H. G. Shurtleiff.....	Roxbury.
Stephen Salisbury.....	Brookline.....	1812-1875	Crayon.....	58 Photograph.....	Mrs. Stephen Salisbury.....	Roxbury.
Jeffries Wyman.....	Cambridge.....	1814-1874	Photograph	60 Mrs. J. S. Woolsey.....	Boston Med. Lib'y Ass'n....	Brookline.
Samuel Parkman.....	Boston.....	1816-1854	Crayon.....	36 Cheney in 1852.....	Mrs. Samuel Parkman.....	Boston.
George Derby.....	Boston.....	1819-1874	Photograph	54 -	Mrs. George Derby.....	Boston.
Edward H. Clarke.....	Boston.....	1820-1877	Painting...	32 -	Mrs. R. H. Fitz.....	Boston.
John E. Tyler.....	Boston.....	1820-1878	"	54 Porter.....	McLean Asylum.....	Somerville.
C. E. Buckingham.....	Boston.....	1822-1876	Photograph	48 -	Mrs. C. E. Buckingham....	Boston.
Nathan Hayward.....	Roxbury.....	1830-1866	"	35 -	John C. Ropes, Esq.....	Boston.
Francis C. Ropes.....	Boston.....	1838-1869	Crayon.....	32 S. W. Rowse in 1869...	Mrs. J. S. C. Greene.....	Boston.
John S. C. Greene.....	Boston.....	1846-1872	"	25 Mrs. Helen Merriman..	D. W. Cheever, M. D.....	Boston.
Charles A. Cheever...	Saugus.....	1793-1852	"	58 A. Conant.....	-	Boston.



SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

MADE TO THE

Boston Medical Library Association,

ON OCTOBER 4, 1881,

BY

JAMES R. CHADWICK, M. D.

LIBRARIAN.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

ON

THE DIRECTORY FOR NURSES,

BY

FREDERICK C. SHATTUCK, M. D.

CHAIRMAN.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

LIBRARY

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

555 EAST 58TH STREET

CHICAGO, ILL.

60637-1508

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U.S.A.

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

MADE TO THE

BOSTON MEDICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION,

On October 4, 1881.

BY

JAMES R. CHADWICK, M. D., LIBRARIAN.

AN accurate appreciation of the near and present is often best conveyed by portraying it in contrast with the remote and past. I shall, therefore, beg you to cast a glance down the perspective of years, few though they be, and see the small band of six men who met in the parlors of Dr. H. I. Bowditch on December 21, 1874, to discuss the establishment of a medical library in this city. No definite steps were taken at that time, but the project was kept constantly before the profession in private intercourse during the succeeding months until the inertia and even active opposition were so far overcome that a general call was issued to the profession to meet on August 20, 1875, when a large attendance was secured, a plan of organization adopted, and the following list of officers elected for the first year:—

Sixth Annual Report.

<i>President</i>	DR. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.
<i>Vice-President</i>	DR. CHARLES E. BUCKINGHAM.
<i>Secretary</i>	DR. OLIVER F. WADSWORTH.
<i>Librarian</i>	DR. JAMES R. CHADWICK.
<i>Treasurer</i>	DR. A. LAWRENCE MASON.
<i>Executive Committee</i>	{ DR. FREDERICK J. KNIGHT, DR. EDWARD WIGGLESWORTH, DR. WILLIAM L. RICHARDSON, DR. J. COLLINS WARREN.
<i>Committee on Admission</i>	{ DR. JAMES C. WHITE, DR. HENRY P. BOWDITCH. DR. THOMAS DWIGHT.

The changes in this list have been few. On the decease of Dr. Buckingham, in 1876, Dr. H. I. Bowditch was elected vice-president. On the resignation of Dr. Mason in 1877, Dr. T. M. Rotch was elected treasurer. In 1880 he declined reëlection and was succeeded by Dr. A. N. Sumner. In 1877 Dr. Warren resigned from the Executive Committee, his place being filled by the election of Dr. F. C. Shattuck, while Dr. C. P. Putnam was added to the committee.

Two rooms in the first floor of No. 5 Hamilton Place were rented, fitted up, and opened in the autumn of 1875, under the charge of Dr. Edwin H. Brigham, as Assistant Librarian.

The Society for Medical Observation was the first body which showed its confidence in the Association by depositing its library of 911 volumes of periodicals in our care. Dr. William Read, of this city, followed this example by intrusting to us his valuable obstetrical library of 200 volumes, and was followed shortly after by the Society for Medical Improvement with a loan of its library of 474 volumes. Stimulated by these acts of liberality, the individual members of the profession, both with and without solicitation, began to shower upon us their literary treasures so lavishly that within two years our shelves were overcrowded with books, our floors littered, and several large

collections stored elsewhere. At the second annual meeting, held on October 9, 1877, I had the gratification of reporting our library as containing 6,466 volumes. On this date the Association was incorporated under the general Act of the Commonwealth.

In the spring of 1878 our exigency for greater accommodation for the library and reading-rooms had become so urgent, and the evidence of our usefulness in promoting the education of the profession become so apparent, that your Executive Committee felt warranted in making an appeal to the profession and the public for pecuniary aid to make possible the purchase of the house No. 19 Boylston Place. The response exceeded expectations, more than ten thousand dollars being collected in a very few months. The house was bought, and such changes made as are set forth in the report of the Building Committee accompanying this report. The building was formally dedicated on December 3, 1878, an occasion which must ever be memorable in our annals, owing not only to the significance of the occasion, but also to the brilliant address of our President, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, and to the appreciative remarks of Dr. John S. Billings, Prof. Justin Winsor, Dr. George H. Lyman, President Charles W. Eliot, Dr. David P. Smith, Dr. Calvin Ellis, and Dr. Henry I. Bowditch; a report of the address and of the subsequent remarks will be found prefixed to this report, as will likewise a list of the loan collection of portraits of deceased Massachusetts physicians brought together for the occasion and hung in the hall. A number of these portraits have since been given to the library, examples of generosity which will, I trust, be largely followed.

From this moment our status could no longer be questioned, we had become one of the permanent institutions of the city. The initiators of the enterprise found in this fact the fulfilment of their expectations and the reward of their labors, their supporters recognized that their

faith was justified by the greater facilities for research and a more rich accumulation of books and journals than they had dared to anticipate, while the scoffers and doubters speedily perceived their error and sought to retrieve it by entering the ranks. The result has been a large accession to the list of members, so that it now includes 225 individuals.

Arrangements were soon made with the several medical societies of the city, which had previously met in Temple Place, to hold their meetings in the hall which we had constructed for this purpose. The sums received from this source have ever since constituted a large item in our annual receipts.

The additions to our library by gifts, bequests, and exchange, since my last printed report (second) on October 9, 1877, have been large and constant. While their number makes it manifestly impossible for me to give a list of all the individual donors, it is fitting that I should render public acknowledgments to our principal benefactors. In the years 1878 and 1879 we received from his widow the library of the late Dr. Charles F. Chaplin, of Cambridge; from his son, Mr. Perkins, the library of the late Dr. Henry C. Perkins, of Newburyport; the library of the late Prof. Edward H. Clarke, of this city, by the provisions of his will; the library of the late Dr. John E. Tyler, of this city, from his widow; and the greater portion of the library of our constant friend Dr. George C. Shattuck, at the instance, and with the approval, of his sons Dr. George B. Shattuck and Dr. Frederick C. Shattuck, of this city. In 1880, from his widow, the library of the late Dr. Charles Pickering, of Boston; from the Roxbury Athenæum, at the instigation of Dr. Henry A. Martin, its collection of medical books; from his widow, the library and surgical instruments of the late Dr. Adino B. Hall, of Boston; from his daughters, the large and valuable library and a fine portrait in oil of the late Dr. Samuel Wy-

man, of Newburyport; from Dr. Algernon Coolidge, of Boston, Hebra's superb colored plates of skin diseases and the Nouveau dictionnaire de médecine; from Dr. Edward Jarvis, of Dorchester, many valuable volumes.

In the year 1878 the Association fitted up a room in the third story for the accommodation of the Library of the American Statistical Association at an annual rental of \$150. This library, which is in charge of our Association and open to the use of its members, contains 3,439 volumes and 12,000 pamphlets, of which 629 volumes and a large portion of the pamphlets relate to vital statistics and insanity.

In 1879 Hon. Robert C. Winthrop gave to the library a most valuable and interesting lot of autographs consisting of, first, a document of nine pages labelled "Receipts to cure various Disorders," "For my worthy friend M^r. Wintrop," and signed by Edward Stafford, London, May 6th, 1643. After giving many prescriptions and directions for the guidance of John Winthrop, first Governor of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, in relieving the physical ailments of his subjects, the writer closes with the following quaint and pious bit of advice, which will hardly commend itself as a prudent rule for conduct in these degenerate days.

"Nota benè.

"No man can with a good conscience take a fee or a reward before y^e partie receive benefit apparent: and then he is not to demand any thing but what God shall putt into the heart of the partie to give him. And he is not to refuse any thing that shall be so given him for it comes from God.

"A man is not to neglect that partie to whom he hath once administered, but to visit him at least once a day, and to medle with no more, than he can well attend. In so doing he shall discharge a good conscience before God & man."

The next paper is a letter from Hans Sloane, founder of the British Museum, giving his diagnosis of a patient's case.

The remainder of the package consisted of twenty-seven letters addressed to John Winthrop, Governor of Connecticut, between 1651 and 1663 by various prominent settlers in all parts of New England, detailing their symptoms or those of their relatives for which they sought medical advice. That these appeals met with a speedy and full response is made evident by one of Governor Winthrop's replies in a four-page autograph letter setting forth at great length and with much display of learning the points of diagnosis, which he admits is very "dubisome to do," and the treatment recommended.

The manuscript "Receipts" of Edward Stafford have been bound up with a reprint of the same with Annotations by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes originally published in the first volume of the "Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society." The letters have been cleansed, pressed, restored, and pasted into a blank book, specially ordered for the purpose, in the most admirable manner by Dr. and Mrs. J. H. S. Fogg, of South Boston.

This whole collection of documents is of great historical value and will be made the nucleus of a collection of medical autographs of past and present physicians, to which contributions are now solicited.

In 1878 the library of the Gynecological Society was intrusted to our care.

To Dr. Calvin Ellis, of Boston, the Association is indebted for many large donations of books and for defraying the expense of collating and cataloguing our collections by the hands of one who is specially qualified for the work by many years of similar service in the Public Library of Boston. She has now been engaged in this task for about eight months.

Drs. F. C. Shattuck and C. P. Putnam have laid us under obliga-

tions for the gift of a fully-equipped catalogue-case with a capacity of 72,000 cards — sufficiently large to meet our requirements for many years to come.

In 1879 a Directory for nurses was established in the library rooms, the whole plan of which was intrusted entirely to a committee of two members of the Executive Committee, Drs. F. C. Shattuck and C. P. Putnam, to whose energy and wisdom the entire success of this widely known and appreciated department of our Association is due. The amount of forethought, practical sagacity, and unremitting labor displayed in developing the present admirable system, whereby good nurses are supplied to the public with the utmost celerity and a minimum of trouble, merits your most cordial acknowledgment. A detailed statement of the scheme and its results by the chairman of the committee, Dr. F. C. Shattuck, is appended to this report. The net income from this source constitutes a large item in the annual receipts of the Association.

OUR PRESENT CONDITION.

Having thus traced in outline the principal features of our recent history, it remains for me to portray the main characteristics of our present condition and then to hang my sketch beside those of the other medical libraries of the country.

Our library contained on October 4, 1881, the following number of volumes : —

American periodicals	1,992 vols.
English periodicals	1,344 "
French periodicals	532 "
German periodicals	532 "
Canadian periodicals	69 "
Other foreign periodicals	102 "
<hr/>	
Periodicals	4,531 vols.
Encyclopedias	532 "
Books	4,391 "
<hr/>	
Total	9,494 vols.
Vital Statistics in the library of the Statistical Society	629 "
<hr/>	
Total in the Reference Library	10,123 vols.

In the Duplicate Library for circulation: —

Periodicals	837 vols.
Books	1,429 "
<hr/>	
Total	2,266 vols.
Total in the Reference Library	10,123 "
<hr/>	
Total in the library	12,389 vols.

We have 5,678 pamphlets, besides a large number on Vital Statistics in the library of the Statistical Society.

Our Association is regularly in receipt of the following periodicals: —

American journals and transactions	173
Canadian journals and transactions	5
Australian journals and transactions	1
English journals and transactions	23
French journals and transactions	28
German journals and transactions	36
Other foreign journals and transactions	20
<hr/>	
Total	286

We own a house admirably adapted to our purposes, valued at over \$20,000, subject to a mortgage of \$8,000, and a floating debt of \$1,000.

We have a hall capable of seating two hundred persons, which is rented by all the medical societies of the city for their meetings. We have a reference library of over 10,000 volumes and nearly 6,000 pamphlets, and a circulating library of over 2,200 volumes. We have capacious and convenient reading-rooms well supplied with the current literature of the day.

Our cataloguer reports that she has collated and catalogued all the journals and transactions of the library up to July 1, 1881; has classified and catalogued all the pamphlets; and has rearranged and made author cards for two thirds of the books.

We carry on a Directory for Nurses which has supplied about nine hundred nurses in the past twelve months.

We have been fortunate in having retained from the outset the services of my assistant librarian, Dr. E. H. Brigham, whose uniform courtesy and never-failing interest, combined with an extensive familiarity with medical literature and an intimate knowledge of the resources of the library acquired by his long service, have contributed largely to the efficiency and success of our institution.

We have an immense accumulation of duplicate periodicals and books which we are constantly drawing upon to effect exchanges with the other medical libraries of this country and of Europe, and are occasionally selling.

So much for our deeds. What are our needs to fill the measure of our usefulness? A considerable sum to meet the cost of long-required changes and repairs of our building; a large sum to expend in binding, for the want of which fully one fourth of our library is exposed to much avoidable deterioration; a large sum annually to complete the sets of periodicals as occasion presents; and another

large sum for the purchase of new books as soon as published, a deficiency in the library which has been constantly felt by our patrons, but which our limited income has been inadequate to remedy.

The measure of support and success which our library has uninterruptedly enjoyed may be better appreciated by contrasting our present status with that of the other libraries which now exist in this State. The following table presents, in two groups, those of Boston and those of the other towns in the Commonwealth, arranged according to the dates on which the several collections were first brought together; it shows, also, the sources from which several of the present libraries were formed.

MEDICAL LIBRARIES IN MASSACHUSETTS.

	Library Founded.	Medical Volumes.	Medical Pamphlets.	Annual Accessions. Vols.	Current Jour. and, Trans. received.
Boston Athenæum { Second Social or Boston Medical Li- brary, 1802-1826. Vols. 1,400. } Boston	1807	5,276	-	30	9
Harvard Medical School, Boston.....	1819	2,000	-	None.	None.
Public Library (Massachusetts Medical Society Library, 1781-1873).	1852	11,146	-	450	
Treadwell Library, Massachusetts General Hospital.....	1857	3,722	-	75	38
Boston Medical Li- brary Association { Boston Society for Medical Observa- tion Library, 1835-1875. Boston Society for Medical Improve- ment Library, 1839-1875. Gynecological Society of Boston Li- brary, 1839-1878. American Statistical Association Li- brary, 1839-1878. } Boston	1875	10,123	5,678	1,000	240
City Hospital, Boston.....	1865	1,000	-	50	35
Harvard University, Cambridge.....	1802	4,350	-	None.	6
Essex South District Medical Society, Salem.....	1805	1,860	225	None.	None.
Worcester District Medical Society, Worcester.....	1845	5,000	400	200	32
Berkshire District { Berkshire Athenæum Library, 1871 } Pittsfield Medical Society. { Berkshire Medical College Library. }	1879	549	204	18	-
Thurber Medical Association, Milford.....	1853	500	None.	10-12	None.
Springfield City Library, Springfield.....	1857	625	-	-	14
Worcester North District Medical Society, Fitchburg.....	1858	675	-	-	-

To this list might be added the Boston Society of Natural History, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, in Boston, which have in their libraries of 13,000 and 16,000 volumes respectively many relating to the scientific branches of medicine.

With this wealth of medical literature in Boston, it might be hastily inferred that our library was uncalled for. The reverse was, however, felt in 1875 to be the case. None of the preëxisting libraries were adequately supplied with the current literature; the use of all was curtailed by restrictions which, while they were in most instances justified by circumstances, rendered them inadequate to meet the requirements of the medical profession. Proof of this assertion is abundantly afforded by the almost universal support that we have received.

In conclusion I would merely point with pride to the rank among the special medical libraries of the country to which our library has attained in six years. It is exceeded only by the National Medical Library in Washington (founded 1865) with 54,000 volumes, the College of Physicians in Philadelphia (founded 1789) with 22,000 volumes, the Academy of Medicine in New York (founded 1846) with 17,000 volumes, the Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia (founded 1763) with 15,000 volumes, the New York Hospital (founded 1796) with 13,100 volumes.

Our Reference Library, therefore, with 10,123 volumes, stands sixth in the list, although founded as late as 1875.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
ON
THE DIRECTORY FOR NURSES.

BY FREDERICK C. SHATTUCK, M. D., CHAIRMAN.

THE establishment of the Medical Library in a building of its own afforded an opportunity for supplying a want which had been long felt in the community, and we are sure that a few words as to this want and the means which were taken to supply it cannot fail to be of interest.

Until within the last two years any person to whose lot it fell to try to secure a competent nurse for a case of sudden illness was compelled to get a long list of nurses from a physician or friend, and often to spend hours of precious time in driving about the city before a nurse could be found; and then, too frequently, the employer had to put up with what was to be had rather than what was desired. In other words, there were no means of finding out what nurses were disengaged at any particular moment, or of learning the real qualifications of a nurse when the immediate and unexpected services of one were required.

Encouraged by the moral and material aid of a few kind friends, not of the medical profession, the Medical Library Association undertook the task of establishing a Directory for Nurses, offered it a home in the Library Building, and appointed a committee of two — Drs.

F. C. Shattuck and C. P. Putnam — with full powers to take the necessary steps. This committee was so fortunate as to enlist the interest of three public-spirited and experienced ladies,¹ who have served as an advisory committee, so called, but to whose self-sacrificing and unwearied labors a large measure of the success of the Directory is due. In July, 1879, the preliminary work was begun, and in the November following the Directory opened with the names of about sixty nurses on its books.

The first step was to send a circular to a number of the physicians in the largest practice in and about Boston, informing them of the project, and asking from each of them a list of such nurses as from personal knowledge he could recommend. To all nurses so vouched for, as well as to all graduates of the training schools² for nurses, circulars were then sent explaining the plan and inviting them to register themselves. Nurses were not slow to see the benefits which would accrue to themselves and the public, and applications for registration soon began to pour in. At first a merely nominal fee of fifty cents was exacted for registration, but this has now been raised to three dollars in order to discourage any but really competent nurses from applying.

Each applicant is required to fill out a blank form stating the name, residence, age, length of experience in nursing, from what training school, if any, he or she has a diploma, whether any particular branch of nursing is preferred to others, whether he or she is willing to take meals in the kitchen, the price per day and per week, and the names of three or four physicians and of a like number of families as references. When this blank is filled out and returned the registrar sends blanks, with a stamped and directed envelope inclosed, to the families and

¹ Miss M. R. Towle, Miss M. A. Wales, Miss A. P. Dixwell.

² The local Training Schools are those of the Massachusetts General and City Hospitals and of the New England Hospital for Women and Children.

physicians named as references. The blank to a physician inquires whether the doctor considers the applicant a desirable nurse, whether she is good-tempered, neat, capable, and mindful of directions, whether she has any faults, and whether she is to be recommended in any special class of cases. The blank to families makes similar inquiries, and begs for any information bearing on the character and qualifications of the applicant. When this set of blanks is filled and returned, the information contained is carefully examined by the committee, and if the nurse is accepted an abstract is made of the reports, and recorded in indexed books specially prepared for the purpose.

Postal cards which merely require a moment to fill out are kept constantly on hand, and sold to nurses at cost price, so that the Directory may be immediately notified of the taking or termination of an engagement, or of a change in residence, price, etc. On the first failure of a nurse to report an engagement promptly, a warning is sent, and on the second failure the name of the delinquent is dropped from the register, to which it can be restored only on payment of a second registration fee.

A card catalogue of all nurses registered is also kept so that the registrar can tell almost at a glance just which nurses are free at any given moment; nurses are also expected to keep the Directory informed as to future engagements, a point of special importance in securing attendance for ladies expecting confinement.

But the work of the Directory does not stop here. A nurse applying for registration is at liberty to choose her references, and will naturally refer to those families and physicians whom she thinks will report most favorably about her. But when once the nurse is registered, blanks specially prepared for the purpose are sent to each person who secures her through the Directory, as well as to the physician in charge of the case. The replies are all submitted to the committee, and then

copied in abstract into the register, or filed away, according to whether new facts are elicited or not. All complaints made by employers are investigated patiently, and every care is taken that strict justice is done as far as possible. The Directory also undertakes to furnish wet nurses, and keeps a list of trustworthy women who take infants to board.

Nurses are not guaranteed employment by the Directory, and are always at liberty to seek occupation for themselves, provided only that they send prompt notification of any engagement secured. The chief aims of the Directory are to put employers and nurses in ready communication with one another, and to afford employers reliable information as to the character and qualifications of one who is about to become an important member of the household.

The registrar — who is also the assistant librarian — lives in the Library Building, which is furnished with a night bell and telephone, so that nurses can be readily secured at all hours of the night as well as of the day. The expenses of the Directory, which for printing and postage are naturally heavy, are met by the fees paid by those securing nurses through its intervention. When information alone is given and the employer seeks out the nurse, a charge of one dollar is made between the hours of eight A. M. and eight P. M., of two dollars between the hours of eight P. M. and eight A. M. But employers often wish the nurse laid down at their doors, as it were, and the Directory undertakes this duty for the further sum of one dollar. When nurses are sent to a distance, in response to a call by telegraph, the charge is somewhat increased according to the extra work incurred. Nurses have been sent in this way to all parts of this, and the other New England States. An instance may be mentioned here which well illustrates some of the advantages of the Directory. A physician in a neighboring town was called to a case of premature confinement, and

the nurse who had been engaged long before was, of course, out of reach. But there was a telephone in the house, the physician immediately put himself in communication with the Directory, and *within an hour* a competent nurse reached the house, distant about five miles from Boston. For wet nurses the fee is five dollars.

There are now 412 nurses registered, of which number 366 are women, 46 are men, and 75 are graduates of a reputable training school. Female nurses receive from 8 to 20 dollars a week; board, lodging, and washing being furnished in all cases, and travelling expenses paid by the employer. Male nurses receive from 20 to 35 dollars a week. The monthly average of the number of nurses furnished from January to November, 1881, is 74.

It was thought best not to advertise in the papers, and the Directory has relied for success solely on its merits. No difficulty whatever is experienced in furnishing full employment to all really desirable nurses, the demand quite keeping pace with the supply. The committee in charge report that they think they can already see the influence of the Directory in helping to raise the standard of nursing, an influence which must steadily increase in force as the advantages of such a central bureau become more and more widely known. The Directory is believed to be the first of its kind ever established, and will doubtless lead to the formation of similar ones in other large cities. No pains will be spared in the future to keep our bureau at the highest possible point of efficiency, and to adopt every improvement suggested by our own experience as well as that of others.



