

## **The Wellcome Historical Medical Museum.**

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## THE WELLCOME HISTORICAL MEDICAL MUSEUM.

THE great interest aroused by the Historical Medical Museum during the recent meeting of the International Congress of Medicine has not abated, and we learn that the daily attendance at the Museum is still large. We recommend all doctors interested in the evolution of their art to visit it before September 30th,\* when it will be closed, to reopen, we believe, in the spring. Short accounts of the Museum appeared in the JOURNAL of May 10th, p. 1035, and June 28th, p. 1379. Since then considerable additions have been made to the collection; but it is Mr. Wellcome's wish to make it as complete as possible. Many families have relics such as MSS., early printed books, diplomas, prescription books, autograph letters and other documents and objects associated with, or collected by, their ancestors who were engaged in medicine, surgery, pharmacy and the allied sciences. Often, on the death of those who cherish such relics, the things are relegated to the garrets, or sent to auction rooms where they are scattered amongst strangers who buy them for a trifle as curios, and so the history and record of associations with the original inventor or user are lost for ever. We venture to suggest that it would be well if these things could be sent to take their place in the Historical Medical Museum, which has now been established in London on a permanent basis by Mr. Wellcome, where they would be preserved, and at the same time form a permanent tribute to the work and memory of those from whom they have been handed down. Many things which are insignificant and of little historical value in themselves if isolated in small private collections become important when brought into association with a series of others arranged chronologically; they often supply the missing links in the chain showing the evolution of such objects. An isolated historical object may be aptly compared to a single mosaic tessera which in itself alone signifies nothing, but when put in its place with others becomes part of a picture, and thus may help to complete a lasting record of a famous deed or a great event.

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