

ART. XIX.—*A Descriptive Catalogue of the Anatomical Museum of the Boston Society for Medical Improvement.* By J. B. S. JACKSON, M. D., Curator of the Museum, Prof. Path. Anat. in Harvard University. pp. xii-352. 8vo. Boston: William D. Ticknor and Co., 1847.

THE Boston Society for Medical Improvement has been in existence since 1828, and honourably maintains the name it bears by the zeal, industry, and liberality of its members. From the introduction to the catalogue, we learn that its meetings are held twice a month, and are rendered interesting by the reading of an original paper, by one of its members in turn, and by the report of cases, &c., which are regularly recorded, the fatal cases being frequently accompanied by the diseased parts themselves. A selection from these morbid specimens—those which illustrate unusual forms of disease having the preference—forms the basis of the cabinet under consideration, of which the “peculiar and principal interest is due to the connection of the specimens, in most instances, with authentic histories of the cases from which they were derived.”

In addition to these, however, “important specimens have been obtained from other sources,” among which is a valuable “collection of Chinese paintings, presented by Dr. Robert W. Hooper, with the nearly complete history of the cases,” a “suite of casts presented by Prof. Nathan R. Smith, of Baltimore,” at the suggestion of his colleague Dr. Roby, who was formerly an active member of this society, and a large collection of gunshot and other injuries of the bones, with their histories, from Dr. S. D. Townsend, obtained from the United States Marine Hospital, at Chelsea, during the war of 1812, and others from Dr. Charles H. Siedman, for some years physician of the same hospital. “Some fine specimens of diseased bones, and several very beautiful anatomical preparations and models of disease,” obtained in Paris, have been presented by Dr. George C. Shattuck, Jr. to the society, and a foundation for a library has been laid by a liberal donation to the society of the library and instruments of the late Dr. George B. Doane, one of its earliest and most respected members.

The Committee mentioned to Dr. Jackson, that they had obtained some new testimony in favour of Dr. Morton (meaning the letters of Mr. Metcalf and of Dr. Dana); but believing that the testimony in these letters was of a nature not to be rebutted, the Committee did not feel called upon to state the fact, that either of these two gentlemen had been consulted. The Committee felt themselves perfectly free, like every one else, to form and to express an opinion upon a matter of universal interest and importance, and which, indeed, seemed to fall naturally within their peculiar province, *even though they had not the previous permission of Dr. Jackson.* Their report had been unanimously accepted by the Trustees, and presented to and unanimously accepted by the Corporation. While it was in process of publication, a note was received from Dr. Gay, alleging that he supposed his objections to the testimony in Mr. Warren’s pamphlet were recognized by the Committee as well founded, and protesting against the course pursued by the Trustees of the Massachusetts General Hospital in giving “any countenance to the attempt of Mr. Morton to rob Dr. Jackson of his sacred right to his own discovery.” Dr. Gay, in his note, significantly adds, that “Dr. Jackson has always, excepting in one unguarded moment, declined submitting his claims to any tribunal, either to be agreed upon by the parties, or *self-constituted and forced upon him.*” He alleges that Dr. Jackson has much new evidence, that the investigation of the Committee must necessarily have been partial. This note of Dr. Gay was laid before the Trustees, at a meeting held Feb. 6; but they deemed no action necessary thereupon. The Committee claim no judicial powers or functions. Dr. Jackson is perfectly free to continue in his prescoted determination of never submitting his exclusive claims to any human tribunal, or he may hereafter submit them to one which he shall regard as more competent or impartial. If, by any new evidence, he can establish these claims, he is still at liberty so to do. The Committee can only state, that they have endeavoured to prosecute their inquiries in a fair, cautious, and thorough manner, and that they feel the utmost confidence in the soundness of the conclusion at which they have arrived; and, conscious that no proceeding or neglect on their part has justified the remarks of Dr. Gay, they here take leave of this subject *for ever.*

In enumerating the sources from which this cabinet has been derived, we consider it an act of justice to direct attention to the untiring zeal and signal ability with which Dr. Jackson, the author of this catalogue, has laboured in behalf of the society. Those who are familiar with its history, well know that he may justly be regarded as the parent of the Society for Medical Improvement, not only as prime mover at its organization, but also in the fostering care which he has up to the present moment bestowed upon it. Without him, the society might, and probably would, have prospered among the enterprising and intelligent members of the profession in Boston; but with him its success was assured, and we find that "the general prospects of the society were never better than at present," it giving evidence of its continued devotion to the cause of medical improvement by thus placing within the reach of the profession everywhere, some of the positive results of its labours.

We can only indicate generally what is the character of the catalogue, and bear our testimony as to its usefulness, without attempting to enter into a detail of its contents. The whole number of the specimens—the written catalogue of which is more detailed than the present publication—is 954, classed in the work before us under fifteen distinct heads and an appendix of articles omitted or which have been presented since the catalogue was made out. These heads are—I. Healthy bones, in all 76 specimens. II. Diseased bones; 227. III. Soft parts about the bones; 15. IV. Heart and blood-vessels; 62. V. Organs of sense; 41. VI. Vocal and respiratory organs; 28. VII. Alimentary canal; 84. VIII. Organs accessory to the alimentary canal; 51. IX. Urinary organs; 64. X. Female organs of generation; 37. XI. Male organs of generation; 23. XII. Utero-gestation; 48. XIII. Monstrosities; 123. XIV. Parasites; 33. XV. Miscellaneous specimens; 24. Appendix; 18.

We feel that this is a very imperfect and unsatisfactory account of a truly valuable work, from which large extracts might very usefully occupy the pages of this journal, and we must, therefore, refer the reader to the work itself, which will amply reward him for the time spent in its perusal.

C. R. K.

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ART. XX.—*Elements of the Principles and Practice of Midwifery.* By DAVID H. TUCKER, M. D., Professor of the Principles and Practice of Medicine, and formerly of Obstetrics, and the Diseases of Women and Children, in the Franklin Medical College of Philadelphia: with numerous illustrations. 12mo., pp. 405. Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston.

THIS forms the first of a series of manuals on the various practical branches of medicine, to be published under the general title of "The Medical Practitioner's and Student's Library." In the preparation of these manuals, the publishers have enlisted the talents of gentlemen, competent to render them a correct and valuable summary of the existing state of the several departments of our science. Receiving the volume before us as an earnest of the manner in which the elementary works, constituting the contemplated series, are to be executed, we are convinced that they will be found a useful addition to the student and young physicians' libraries.

The treatise of Dr. Tucker is confessedly a compilation from the works of the standard writers on obstetrics. In the execution of this compilation, the author has exhibited considerable judgment, and by the skilful arrangement and weaving together of his materials, has given to the work all the oneness and completeness of an original treatise.

The student will find in it a very plain and accurate, though concise description of the anatomy of the female pelvis, and organs of generation. A general view of the subject of generation, with an exposition of the leading opinions as to the mode in which it is effected; together with the history of the ovum, and the anatomy of the fœtus. The subject of pregnancy or utero-gestation, is very ably treated. The directions for the management of cases of ordinary labours, are pointed and judicious. The chapter on turning or version, is a very excellent one.