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EXTRACTS FROM THE <sup>First</sup> ~~LAST~~ DRAFT OF "BIBLIOTHECA OSLERIANA" INTRODUCTION.

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(In these passages the first draft differs from the final draft).

Dr. Cushing made a copy of the final  
draft in the summer of 1920.



and reverence inspired by the man who could write such wonderful books. Canada was a far-away country in those days, and I used to wonder if I should every be so fortunate as to see any of these great men.

Before the winter was over, many works on many subjects had been skimmed, to the hurt of regular studies, but it was in the long evenings in the cold room, before a grate fire, often with a blanket about my legs and another about my shoulders, a student's lamp at my side, that the infection reached my bone marrow.

My godd preceptor and I parted in the spring of 1870 - he to the West Indies, to a life of sacrifice among the coloured people, I to a summer of desultory work with a microscope at home, and in the autumn to Montreal (McGill). We never met again. I owe to him a love of books, and more - the two and a half to three years of his tutelage put the AEsculapian spirit into my soul, and made me realize those memorable words in the Hippocratic oath, "I will honour as my father the man who teaches me the art."

Dr. Bovell's books were sold while I was in England in '73. A few find their places in this collection - Beale's How to Work with a Microscope ( ), Owen's Comparative Anatomy ( ), Chamber's Renewal of Life ( ), Niemeyer's Practice of Medicine ( ).

At the old-fashioned 'Defence of Thesis', the table in front of the Faculty was covered with preparations sent in to illustrate my thesis. ~~These had made so strong an impression that a speci~~

From S. and J. Nock, Bloomsbury, I got all the books for my thesis prize - Billroth's Surgical Pathology, <sup>Rindfleisch's Pathology,</sup> Stricker's Histology, Hand-Book for the Physiological Laboratory.

It was a typical old secondhand book shop, crowded to the ceilings, and the brothers both aged, and rapidly becoming decrepit, were very keen and intensely interested to hear about Canada and the Library. They lived above the shop, and not infrequently afterwards I went in and had a cup of tea with them.

This collection goes to McGill in grateful recognition of the confidence which the faculty put in me, a young untried man. Another feature of the case must be mentioned; it had been the custom to give the full chairs as they fell vacant to the clinical Professors and either Dr. Ross or Dr. Roddick might have blocked, had they wished to, my appointment. The position was a godsend. During the session with in fees, and \$250 a month as physician to the small-pox hospital, by the spring I was rich and able to invest in the much needed microscopes and apparatus. The winter was full of hard experiences. To give more than a hundred lectures - four or five a week - was a great trial, and by Christmas my energies were low. No. in the catalogue saved my life. In Vienna I had attended the physiology lectures of Brücke and on leaving in the spring I had ordered his Vorlesungen über der Physiologie.

*\* → insert later passage marked \* here*

In Baltimore I became deeply interested in bibliography and the history of medicine. Dr. Billings was a great stimulus, and within a few months of the opening of the hospital, he read us a most interesting paper on rare medical books. He lectured, too, on the history of medicine, and was our guide and friend in all matters relating to books. So rapidly did the interest grow, that in November 1890, we organized the Hospital Historical Club of which Dr. Welch was the first President. Looking over the accounts of the meetings since its foundation as given in the Hospital Bulletin, one

cannot but feel gratified in the success of the undertaking. Many valuable papers have been presented, and the Club has been a stimulus to work, and a model for many similar societies throughout the country. Upon Dr. Welch, the life of the Club, we could always depend for an appreciative discussion, and his good nature invariably consented to fill a gap in the program. During the first session I read papers upon John Morgan, John Jones, and Nathan Smith, which stimulated my interest in the early history of American medicine. In our second session Dr. Welch began a systematic presentation of Greek medicine. From its inception, Dr. Kelly took a deep interest in the work and we shared in the benefits of his liberal purchases of older works relating to his department. Dr. Hurd, the Director, was a pivot about which the Hospital societies worked. The Historical Club was always dear to his heart.

*Below my previous page*  
 We had a journal club which proved a financial failure, and I am afraid when I left Montreal there were debts which were never paid.

I was not able to do much during the winter months, but in the long summer holiday of three, sometimes four, months I made rapid progress. The Sir Thomas Browne collection was practically completed before I left Baltimore.

Auction and dealers catalogues were carefully scanned, and the more important items were bought within five or six years. The late Charles Williams of Norwich was a great help. One or two editions had never been found - a 1683, Dutch, a quarto of the entire work, and a doubtful Latin edition. Altogether the catalogue shows there are items. The manuscript of the Religio is one of seven known copies, and was bought at Southeby's in 1905 for £30. It came

from a collection of Lancashire manuscripts, chiefly household accounts bound together between 1605 and 40. One of the rarest books is the catalogue of the library of Sir Thomas Browne and his son, Edward, about which there is a printed note.

Gradually the idea came to collect a library of the important works of the great masters of medicine and science. Harvey and Vesalius have caused no end of interest. For years I had been looking for a <sup>first</sup> final edition, 1628, of the De Motu Cordis. A copy was missed at a London sale in the nineties. The edition must have been small. Few copies are in the great libraries and it has been offered only times at the sales in London between and . Then I got three copies in one year, 1906, - two from Pickering and Chatto - one badly cut -  $7 \frac{3}{8} \times 5 \frac{3}{8}$ , which William James of New York took off my hands; the other from the Milne Edwards library, the only uncut copy I have ever seen -  $8 \frac{1}{2} \times 6 \frac{1}{2}$  inches. A third copy was sent from Sawyer, and with it were bound the Spongia of Regius and the Antidotum of Primrose. I presented this copy to the Johns Hopkins Medical Library. The little book sells anywhere from a few pounds to £40. Dr. W. W. Keen picked it up in Italy for a few francs. One of the worst printed of books, with poor type, and the paper is always foxed.

The English edition of the De Generatione is a book about which there is a great deal of nonsense in the catalogues. I paid two guineas for my copy, and the same day <sup>at</sup> a book shop not far away saw one priced at eighteen guineas. A copy sold at Southeby's in 1892 for £40.10/-. It is really not uncommon, and Dr. Payne assured me that a large number of copies having been burned in the great fire is mythical. By far the rarest Harvey book is a little 12mo Exer-

citatio Anatomica, 1649. It was not in the British Museum until a few years ago. In a Voynich catalogue it was stated to be practically unknown - no copy in the British Museum, Bodleian, Cambridge, or Surgeon General's Library and was priced at £25. There is a copy at the Bodleian, and I know of several others. I picked up my copy for a few pounds. The British Museum bought the one offered by Voynich.

The collection of the original edition of Vesalius was well in hand before I left Baltimore. The 1543 Fabrica is not a difficult book to get, and the price for ~~the~~ first rate copies should not exceed £20 (\$100). The edition must have been large, as copies are common. I have had seven - one which I gave to Dr. Barker, one to the Frick Library, one to <sup>the University of</sup> the Library of Missouri, Columbus, one to McGill Medical Library, one to the Boston Medical Library, and one to the Academy of Medicine, New York. On ~~one~~ of my return visits, I said to Dr. Shepherd of Montreal that I had a great treasure for the Library and showed him the 1543 Fabrica. He smiled and said, "Why, you sent us a beautiful copy a few years ago." I took it on to Boston where I had the same experience. Dr. Farlow said nothing, but took me up to the show case in the Oliver Wendel Holmes room and there was the Fabrica 1543. I had given it ten years before. I was glad to find that the Academy <sup>of Medicine</sup> in New York did not yet number it among their books. The 1542 Epitome is much more difficult to get. The 1538 Tabulae sex is known in only two copies at the St. Marco Library, Venice, and the Library of Sir John Maxwell

. In 1874 Sir John issued forty copies of a beautiful reproduction. Harvey Cushing and I had thought of reproducing it again for the quatercentenary of the birth of Vesalius, and Sir Herbert Maxwell very kindly sent his copy to the Bodleian. I asked him if any specimens were left of his father's edition, and to my surprise, he said that only a few had been distributed. He sent those remaining to

the medical libraries on the list I gave him, and also an example to Dr. Cushing. My copy, bought for a couple of pounds, was a presentation to Lord Napier of Merchiston. Original editions of the smaller works of Vesalius are very rare. The 1537 Paraphrases in *Nomun Librum Rhazae* exists in two editions, one of which, that of Basel, is in the Library. The 1539 *Epistola*, Basel, was given to me by Dr. Howard Kelly. The *Epistola* on the Chyna-root, a fine *Operinus folio*, 1546, came from the sale of Mitchell Banks' library. Vesal's edition of the *Anatomy of Guinterius*, 1538, I have not been able to get, nor have I the 1564 edition of the *Observations on the Anatomy of Falloppius*. Vesalius' translation and the edition of Galen's *Anatomical Work* are in the *Junta*, 1541, *Galenii Omnia Opera*, and in the 1542 *Froben Operum Galeni*. The superb second edition of the *Fabrica* is in the library, and one or two other *Epitomes* and editions, but I have made no attempt to make the collection complete except in the original editions.

A library should grow endogenously, particularly if designed as an adjunct to a general one. A constant process of weeding got rid of the books likely to be in the Redpath or the Holmes Libraries of McGill. Except for special reasons the ordinary text-books and monographs and journals have not been kept but there are exceptions. For example, Vol. I of the *Lancet* is here for the sake of the founder, Wakeley; Vol. 1 of the *Guys Hospital Reports*, for the sake of the men who founded it; vol. 1 of the *American Journal of Dentistry*, as the first publication of its kind, and there are other instances. The primary object was to get, as far as possible, all the original editions of the important writers in science and in medicine. In some cases, easy, in others, very difficult, in others again it is impossible. Let me give illustrations. Within a few years any one could collect a complete set of the original editions of Vesal - minus the Tabulae



sex. The de motu cordis, 1628, of Harvey turns up every few years, the Epistola to Riolan not once in ten. Of the first nine works of Ambroise Paré, the S.G.L. has six, the B.M., Bodley none, even the Bibliotheque Nationale has not all, nor has the Bibliotheque de l'école de Medicine. They do not exist, as in the vernacular and popular students thumbed them out of existence. Here may be explained the absence from the library of certain items in the catalogue. In 1917 in a catalogue of Gougy, Paris, appeared the item Anatomie Universelle 1561. A hurried consultation with Malgaigne ( ) confirmed my surmise as to its rarity - only two copies known, one in the St. Genievieve (imperfect) and another in private hands. A telegram brought the beautifully bound copy, within 48 hours, and for the very reasonable sum of 250 francs. It does not appear to be in any of the larger libraries - and neither the Bibliotheque Nationale, nor the Bibliotheque of the Ecole de Medicine has a copy. Under these circumstances it seemed only right to will the volume to the Paris Faculty. (Since writing I see there is a copy in the Hunterian Library, Glasgow). The Editiones principes, of the classics, Aristotle, Hippocrates, Theophrastus, etc. are easily got - time and money are the essentials. For the very early printed works the search may be longer and more difficult. The ed. prin. of Avicenna is not here, or of Rhazes. The Averroes, 1482, which seems excessively rare, is due to the withdrawal of the B.M. bid at the Dunn sale. (I never thought it right to bid against either the B.M. or (of course) Bodley). Many contributions of the first importance are buried in Journals or Transactions difficult to get unless the whole set is purchased. There was a long wait for no. of Linnean Society's Journal with Darwin and Wallace's original papers, which set the mind of man whirling. The President of the Society (Prof. Poulton) picked out a copy in the Society's Library. Pasteur's first paper I have never been able to get,

(Comptes. Rend. Acad. de Science, Lille 18). Like Bodley I have bled my friends whenever possible. Many of the Simpson Pamphlets - and the interesting corrected proof sheet of his last paper on anaesthesia came from his nephew Sir Alexander. His nephew, Sir Richman Godlee gave a big bundle of <sup>Lister's</sup> ~~Hester's~~ papers. Morton's son, Dr. William Morton of New York sent his father's original pamphlets.