

**THE PRACTITIONERS SOCIETY OF
NEW YORK, 1882-1907. ITS
ORGANIZATION, HISTORY AND
WORK FOR TWENTY-FIVE YEARS**

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The Practitioners Society of New York, 1882-1907. Its Organization, History and Work for
Twenty-Five Years by Practitioners Society of New York

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The
Practitioners Society of New York
1882-1907

Its Organization, History and Work for
Twenty-five Years

Printed for the Society
1907

HISTORY.

Ten years ago a Hand-book of The Practitioners Society was issued giving a brief history of the Society, its organization and a record of the principal articles read before it.

I cannot introduce this second volume better than by reproducing the sketch of the origin of the Society written at that time, for it tells the story, while the original book is out of print and few copies exist.

* * * * *

¹The first meeting of *The Practitioners Society* was held at the house of Dr. Wm. M. Polk in May, 1882. The larger number of the original members, whose names follow, were then present: Drs. A. B. Ball, Wm. T. Bull, C. L. Dana, V. P. Gibney, J. B. Hunter, F. P. Kinnicutt, E. G. Loring, T. A. McBride, Wm. M. Polk, G. L. Peabody, S. Sexton, A. A. Smith, G. F. Shradly, R. F. Weir, H. F. Walker. By-Laws were drawn up and the organization perfected. Dr. James B. Hunter was elected President, and Dr. Charles L. Dana Secretary. The general purposes of the society were discussed and its future work outlined. The object desired was to bring together gentlemen representing general and special departments of medicine, always including as far as possible those who had the best opportunities for clinical and pathological study. It was believed that by introducing such topics from the different special fields as had a general and practical interest, mutual

advantage would be secured, and that all would be kept in better touch with the progress of medicine. The broader and more practical problems of medicine and surgery were those with which the Society was most to concern itself. Such a subject as "The Sequelæ of Measles" seemed to fit the sentiment of the evening, and Dr. Virgil P. Gibney volunteered to read a paper upon this topic.

The plans of the Society included a very simple organization and a limited membership of fifteen. The social features were to be kept in mind, but were to be subordinate. This was to be a working and not an eating society.

The views developed and accepted at this early meeting have not been essentially changed during the fifteen years of the Society's existence. Its work has gone on unostentatiously and with the utmost personal harmony, until without consciousness of such ambition The Practitioners Society finds itself a leader among the private medical societies of the country.

The character and scope of the Society's scientific work is shown in the accompanying list of papers, reports and discussions. The solidarity of the organization is indicated very strikingly by the fact that of the original members only one has resigned.

* * * * *

The original members of the Practitioners Society numbered fifteen, and that was at first the limit of membership. Their names are given in the preceding sketch. Of these original members four, viz: Dr. James B. Hunter, Dr. Edward C. Loring, Dr. Thomas A. McBride and Dr. Samuel Sexton have died. Of later members, five have died, viz: Dr. E. Darwin Hudson, Dr. Charles S. Ward, Dr. William C. Lusk, Dr. J. West Roosevelt and Dr. William H. Draper.

During the whole period of its quarter of a century of activity the Society has lost eight members by death, and six by resignation. Of these latter, one, Dr. Charles S. Ward, subsequently died.

With its present active membership of twenty-one and honorary membership of eight, forty-one men have altogether been connected actively with the work of the Society.

A corrected, and it is believed, complete list of the contributions of each member of the Society has been prepared and is published here.

A perusal of these lists of cases, articles, discussions, and presentations will have for members a more than personal interest, for it will show that The Practitioners Society has been keeping in close touch with nearly every phase of practical activity in the medical profession, and has contributed not a little to it in the last twenty-five years.

The general character and purposes of the Society have remained the same. It has not changed its methods or ideals, nor has it lost any of its original spirit of good-fellowship. And we can say that during all these years nothing has occurred to disturb the harmony of social intercourse or to embarrass the scientific interest and enthusiasm of the members.

The name of "The Practitioner's Society" has been adopted in other cities and this Society has served in its methods of work as a model for other medical organizations. The Practitioner's Society, therefore, at the end of its first quarter of a century can assume to itself credit, at least in this small and privately printed volume, of having not only worked efficiently in behalf of practical medicine, but also of having set a standard for a method of united work which has had a very considerable influence for good throughout the country. We among ourselves may claim to be the Star to which others have "hitched their

wagons⁸ and been drawn, we hope, onwards and upwards.

The writer was authorized by the Executive Committee to prepare this volume, securing for it, if possible, portraits of all its members. Through their kind co-operation this task has been almost accomplished, a few portraits of deceased members alone being lacking. I am indebted also to the Secretary, Dr. Lewis A. Conner, for valuable assistance.

C. L. D.

OFFICERS

1907

**PRESIDENT
ROBERT ABBE**

**SECRETARY
LEWIS A. CONNOR**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
T. MITCHELL PRUDDEN
FRANCIS P. KINNICUTT
JOHN W. BRANNAN**

THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY EX OFFICIO

OFFICERS SINCE ORGANIZATION.

PRESIDENTS.

James B. Hunter,	1882-3
Robert F. Weir,	1883-4
A. Brayton Ball,	1884-5
Beverley Robinson,	1885-6
George F. Shrady,	1886-8
Francis P. Kinnicutt,	1888-90
George L. Peabody,	1890-2
Charles L. Dana,	1892-4
Henry F. Walker,	1894-5
Andrew H. Smith,	1895-7
W. Gilman Thompson,	1897-8
A. Alexander Smith,	1898-1901
Joseph D. Bryant,	1901-3
Charles S. Bull,	1903-5
T. Mitchell Prudden,	1905-6
Robert Abbe,	1906-7

SECRETARIES.

Charles L. Dana,	1882-92
W. Gilman Thompson,	1892-4
Robert Abbe,	1894-5
Herman M. Biggs,	1895-7