

**THE HARVARD  
MEDICAL SCHOOL,  
1782-1906**

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The Harvard Medical School, 1782-1906 by Harvard Medical School

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## INTRODUCTION.

THE history of the Harvard Medical School presented herewith had its inception in two votes of the Faculty of Medicine under date of January seventh and February fourth, 1905. The general outline suggested by a special committee appointed for the purpose was approved by the Corporation in a letter submitted to the Faculty of Medicine on April first, 1905.

The plan adopted includes the attempt to present the history of the School by Departments. With one exception the history of each Department is written by or under the direct supervision of its Head, and these accounts are arranged in historical sequence. The exception is that of Chemistry. The plan of the book was outlined and work begun upon it during the prolonged and fatal illness of Prof. Edward S. Wood. Dr. James C. White, Professor Emeritus of Dermatology, and formerly Professor of Chemistry, has been good enough to write the sketch of that subject. By the method adopted it is possible to follow the growth of the School from a new point of view, and to note when the demands for new branches of medical instruction have been satisfied.

The "Department" in the Medical School has always had a somewhat different significance from that attributed to it in other parts of the University, and has been, loosely, held to indicate a branch of instruction of sufficient importance to have its Head rank higher than an annual appointment. Some years ago the Faculty expressed its approval of a grouping of allied Departments into Divisions, but the only one yet in existence is the Division of Surgery.

Changes and expansion in instruction are going on all the time. Some have been begun since this volume was undertaken, as is

instanced by the establishment of the Chair of Comparative Anatomy and the appointment of Professor Minot to organize the Department. Indeed the immediate future may be looked upon as likely to be, in every way, a time of great activity and change in the teaching given by the School. Definite movements are on foot to enlarge the scope and variety of the instruction offered to the medical students—to provide instruction of a primary nature for those who may be interested in applied biology—and to develop courses of the highest type that may lead to other University honors than the Doctorate of Medicine. For all these activities the new buildings offer ample space and facilities, and the friends of the School seem justified in looking forward to the development of medical teaching and research to a form and extent that has not been before realized.

Perhaps the most important recent action taken by the Faculty of Medicine is that by which a large addition to its numbers is made with the opening of the new year. Appointments for more than one year carry with them a seat in the Faculty and fourteen annual appointments have been made to extend over three years, so that the holders enter the Faculty upon the beginning of the new term. In this instance it is noticeable that a large majority of the promotions represent the clinical as contrasted with the laboratory branches of instruction.

The following pages form a summary of the growth of the School for one hundred and twenty-four years up to this present eventful point in its career. The use of portraits of individuals has been governed by the rule that the first occupant of each chair should be shown, provided he be not now alive. It has, however, been impossible to discover any portrait of Dr. Aaron Dexter, the first Professor of Chemistry and Materia Medica.