

**HISTORICAL SKETCH
OF THE OBSTETRICAL
SOCIETY OF BOSTON**

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Historical Sketch of the Obstetrical Society of Boston by Benjamin E. Cotting & William W. Wellington

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COTTING

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OF THE
Obstetrical Society of Boston;

BY

BENJAMIN E. COTTING, A.M., M.D., (Harv.).

Member of the Society, &c. &c.

"Historia quoquo modo scripta delectat."

PLIN. 2^{da} V. 8.

BOSTON:
DAVID CLAPP & SON.
564 WASHINGTON STREET.
1881.

Read June 11, 1881.
Printed by vote of the Society.

TO MEMBERS O. S. OF B.

I HAVE not any apology to offer for the present paper. On the accession of our new President, last winter, I handed to him my resignation of membership, that he might have fresher and abler assistance in a new and younger member. He returned my note with an *order* to write a History of the Society, for the June meeting;—adding that he had directed another member to prepare sketches of deceased members for the same occasion.

As an old advocate for subordination I felt constrained to comply.

I confess also to a certain satisfaction in thus being called to render a last service to the Society in connection with one with whom I have been in intimate and uninterrupted friendship from infancy onward—a period of more than sixty years.

Nevertheless, throughout the following sketch it

should be borne in mind continuously that the paper is not a volunteered offering, but an unwonted labor exacted by an arbitrary command of our President ; —and that, in such circumstances, if criticism be not disarmed, at least the *lusus* in the production may be naturally accounted for.

ROXBURY, BOSTON, 1881.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

CHAPTER I.

"Ex opere ipso labor."—Quint. x. 3.

THE FIRST DECADE.

THE Obstetrical Society of Boston is now well advanced in its twenty-first year.

On the evening of December 7th, 1860, the writer, then a suburban, having gone into town to a lecture which he was very desirous to hear, had just seated himself quietly in the crowded hall when, traced thither, he was touched upon the shoulder and called out by Dr. Charles G. Putnam, who urgently requested his attendance in another part of the city, where other gentlemen had assembled, and were awaiting the Doctor's return. The purpose of their meeting was briefly stated. That the writer was unaware that any such undertaking was thought of, mattered not; that he did not feel any spontaneous inclination to join in forming such a society; nor possess any *special* qualifications for member-