

## Establishing the Hospital and the Medical Library

*Further Excerpts from "A Doctor's Memories" by Dr. Victor C. Vaughan, '78m\**

**A**S I have already indicated, laboratory instruction in chemistry developed by leaps and bounds. Frequent additions were made to the first small building. It grew in every direction, both in height and in depth, since the basement was supplied with tables. Each table was furnished with reagents. In fact, I have visited many chemical laboratories in various countries and I can say that I have never seen one which did not bear a close similitude to that in which I began my work in 1874, but long before my time medical students at Michigan pursued much the same courses as I did. Nor was the laboratory chemical teaching confined to medical students. Students in the collegiate department anticipating medicine or any other calling in which this science might be useful availed themselves of the opportunities. Above all chemistry was taught as a science and not as applicable to some practical problem. Prospective medical students soon became aware of the fact that it was well to do their laboratory work before entering a medical school, either at Michigan or elsewhere. It should be plainly understood that Michigan University owes its past and present eminence in chemistry to the initiative of the Medical School. Chemical teaching grew out of no want felt for it in the collegiate department. It was thrust upon the University by the initiative and insistence of the Medical School; nor is this the sole instance in which the University has been benefited by the Medical School.

### Before the Hospital was Established

**I** AM sure that the reader will want to know how the Michigan University Medical School managed to thrive for twenty-five years without a hospital. Samuel Denton (Professor of Medicine, 1850-1860) was a member of the first Board of Regents and, with Mason, Schoolcraft, and Pitcher, possibly had something to do with the inauguration of the Medical School, but so far as I can learn he contributed but little to its reputation. During his professorship little was done in building up a clinic in internal medicine. The intellect and energy expended in the development of clinical facilities and teaching were largely supplied by Moses Gunn. He announced to the physicians of the State that the forenoons of Wednesday and Saturday would be devoted to consultations with them over their difficult cases. Emergency cases would be seen at any time. There would be no charge to either the doctors or their patients so far as these consultations were conducted in the presence of the students. In this wise and mutually helpful way began that flow of the stream of the sick and injured citizens of Michigan to Ann Arbor. Small at first, this stream has



DOCTOR ALONZO B. PALMER.

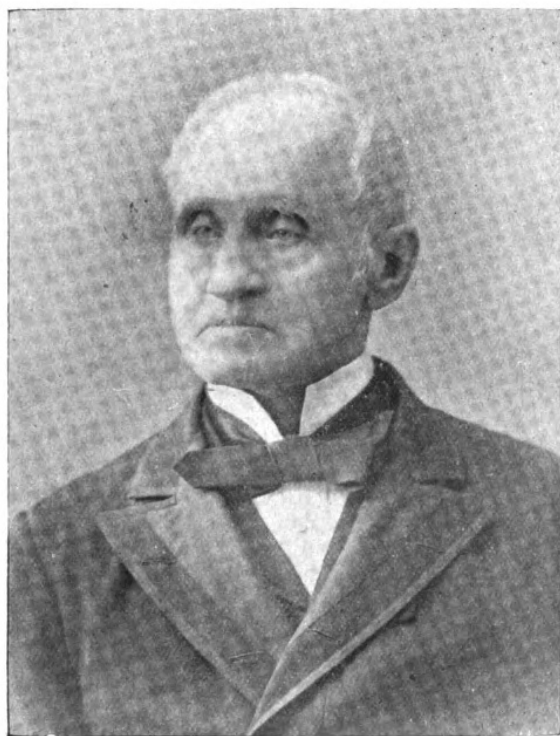
*Professor in the Medical School from 1852-1887*

grown until now (1926) it fills to overflowing the splendid University Hospital of many hundreds of beds. Indeed it has been found necessary at times to check and regulate the incoming material. Herein lies a difficulty which has given and will continue to give to an increasing degree the Medical School cause for wise counsel. The clinical teachers in the School should never lose sight of the fact that the facilities they now enjoy had their origin and their continued growth in the mutually helpful cooperation between the physicians of the State and the medical Faculty. There can be no departure from this contract without injury to both parties. This unwritten agreement, originated in the brain of Moses Gunn, was accepted and endorsed by the physicians of the fifties and on the whole has operated to the satisfaction and benefit of the successors of both parties.

At first the number of patients brought to the consultations on Wednesday and Saturday mornings was small, but they were wisely and profitably used. I employ the words "wisely and profitably" intentionally and specifically. The patients were often benefited and in all instances received the best medical opinion without cost. The physicians had their diagnoses and treatment confirmed or modified by the best available experts. The students profited by the instruction received. As I have said, there was absolutely no hospital; for many years not even a receiving house. The doctors

\*Reprinted by special permission of the publishers, the Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis.





THE REVEREND ANDREW TEN BROOK, A. M.

One of the First Professors in the University, Historian of University's Early Days, and Librarian from 1864 to 1877

of the immediate vicinity did not bring their patients until the early morning of a clinic day. Those from greater distances lodged their patients in the hotel or in some boarding house. Invariably the physician accompanied his patient, or at least the exceptions to this rule were few. In some instances, probably in most, the professor had seen and examined the patient before he was brought before the class. Not infrequently the professor devoted his hour, sometimes more than one, to "some of the cases we are to see Wednesday or Saturday." As a student I saw more than one surgical operation performed on a cadaver, or illustrated on a manikin, or figured in detail on charts, the day before I saw the operation on the patient. More frequently I saw these demonstrations the day after the operation. These procedures were highly helpful to the student.

### The First Hospital

WHEN I went to Ann Arbor in the seventies one of the professor's houses on the north side of the Campus was known as "University Hospital." It was, however, nothing more than a receiving home, in which patients brought in for the clinics could be kept before and after presentation to the class. There were no wards and no operating or dressing rooms, no place where students might receive bedside instruction. On Wednesday and Saturday mornings students carried patients on

stretchers across the Campus to the Medical Building, where the procedures I have already described were carried out.

It must not be inferred that during the twenty-five years (1850-1875) the School was without a hospital the clinical growth was exclusively along surgical lines. The year 1854 marked an epoch in the School's development, for in that year there came to it two great teachers. Of one and his work I have already written. This one was Corydon L. Ford, the great teacher of anatomy. The other was Alonzo B. Palmer, a great teacher of internal medicine. Palmer was a graduate in the class of 1839 of that large school known as the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Western New York, to which I have already referred. After some years as a village doctor, Palmer went to Chicago, became a partner of that Nestor of American medicine, N. S. Davis, and soon acquired a large, varied, and remunerative practice. From Chicago he came to Ann Arbor in 1854 under the inclusive title of "professor of materia medica, therapeutics, and diseases of women and children." How all-embracing and far-extending this title seems today, but if any man was in 1854 competent to give instruction in all these branches it was A. B. Palmer. His knowledge of medicine for that time was encyclopedic, as his diary, published by his wife after his death, will convince anyone who reads it. Nor was his learning confined to medicine. He knew English literature, was devoted to Shakespeare and graced the most intellectual society in both this country and in England. However, even surpassing his wisdom was his readiness to impart it. He delighted in talking to students, and no colleague had any difficulty in inducing him to fill an hour. I have known him to fill two consecutive hours, and still be ready for the third. He did no general practice, and would readily forego a consultation and the fee that might be attached to it if he could lecture. I must say that he continued to the end a diligent student, reading current literature and keeping posted, if not always fully appreciative of the latest advances in medicine. From the beginning of his work as a teacher he was as scientific as one could be at that time in methods of diagnosis. He drilled his students *ad nauseam* in the employment of instruments of precision; auscultation and percussion were not only his favorite hobbies, but in their use he showed great skill. I remember how proudly he exhibited to me the first laryngoscope I ever saw.

In 1877 the wooden pavilion hospital, accommodating about 150 patients, with operating amphitheater, dressing rooms, and so forth, was opened. It may be of historic interest to state that this building was planned under the supervision of Edward S. Dunster, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology. It was of the type employed in the latter part of the Civil War. Dunster had been an army surgeon and for a time after the war he was post surgeon at West Point; then he resigned, and taking

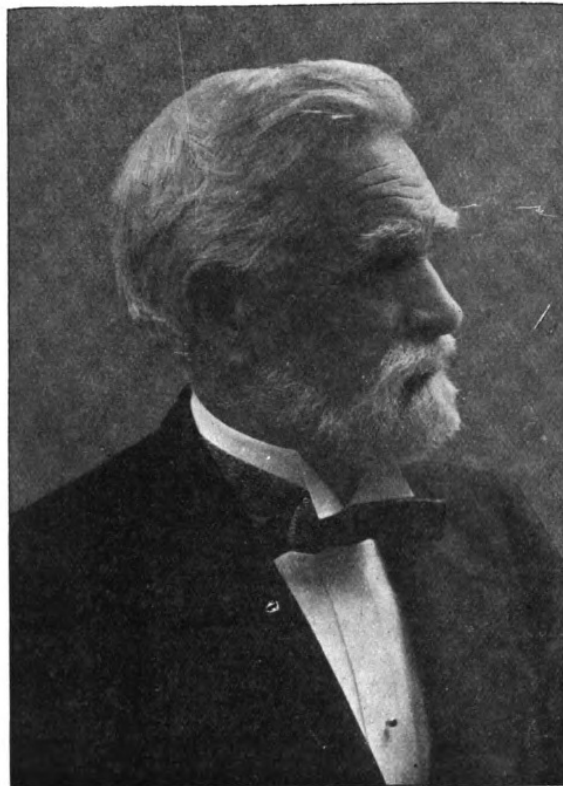


up his specialty, became a pupil of Sims, Peaslee, and Thomas. When built it was understood that this hospital would become so badly infected within ten years that it would be necessary to burn it. It served as a hospital until 1890 and for at least twenty years more as a class and laboratory room. It occupied the space now covered by the chemical laboratory.

### The Beginnings of the Medical Library

ALONG with laboratory and clinical facilities the Medical School must have a good library and for the prosecution of scientific research the library must be selected along definite lines. I will admit that I am proud of what I did for the Medical School in this direction. While still only an assistant in the laboratory I found that the medical library was woefully deficient in both the number and character of its books. Each professor had about three hundred dollars a year for the purchase of books for his department, the total for the Medical School running from twenty-five hundred to three thousand dollars. I suggested to the medical Faculty that it would be wise to allow one person to select the books, having in mind the interests of all branches. I found that all the professors were glad to follow this suggestion and the task was turned over to me, although I was, as I have said, only an assistant and had no appropriation of my own. The shelves of the library were filled with textbooks which were out of date in a few years after publication. There were, it is true, a few sets, most of them incomplete, of American and English journals. The only French journal was the *Archives Generales de Medicine*, and the only German one was Schmidt's *Jahrbücher*, and neither of these was complete. Doctor Prescott and I talked over the matter and concluded that we would greatly limit the purchase of textbooks and devote the larger part of our money to the acquisition of complete sets of scientific journals in all languages. We also decided to interpret a medical journal in a broad way, including chemistry, physics, and biology. Of course, cooperation between Doctor Prescott and myself meant a substantial increase in our common fund.

AT this point I am going to confess to the only intentional and premeditative fraud I ever perpetrated on the University of Michigan. At that time the librarian was the Reverend Ten Brook—most college librarians at that time were Reverends. They seemed to have had a claim on the chair of mental and moral philosophy and the office of librarian, and most of them were suspicious of scientific books. This dear old man was grouchy, one of that class in whom I have been wont to say the milk of human kindness has undergone the lactic acid fermentation. To him I went with my carefully prepared list of journals. He received me with scant courtesy. I think that his mood was partly due to the fact that one below the rank of



ALBERT BENJAMIN PRESCOTT, M. D., LL. D.

Professor of Chemistry from 1865 to 1905, Dean of the School of Pharmacy from 1878 to 1905, Director of the Chemical Laboratory from 1884 to 1905

professor had dared come to him. My list was for current subscriptions, as Doctor Prescott and I had decided to begin with these and fill up the back numbers later, since we knew that this would take a long time. The reverend librarian growled at the proposed purchase of so many journals in foreign languages and when he looked at the total cost he said with an air of finality and dismissal that it could not be done. I tried to argue and asked him to submit the list to the library committee. This he declined to do and turned me out of his room rudely. This rudeness probably saved my cause, because I am sure that the good old man thought it over and concluded that he had not treated me quite justly. The list which I had submitted carried the annual subscriptions, but many of the journals provided for semi-annual, and some for quarterly payments.

A few days later I faced the good old gentleman again with exactly the same list but with the prices cut down to the smallest time limit, most of the subscriptions being for only three months. The dear old man with no word of apology but with a face as full of kindness as he could mold it, signed his approval and before my eyes put the list in an envelope and addressed it to the European agency. Then he kindly dismissed me. I could have hugged





DR. CORYDON La FORD, M. D., I L. D.

*Professor of Anatomy, 1854-1894, Lecturing Before a Class in the Old Medical Amphitheatre*

him but I dared not. I left his room full of elation, tinged and softened with foreboding of what might happen when requests for renewals would come in. Nothing did happen, at least so far as I know, and the journals on that list, so far as war interruptions have permitted, are still coming to the library of the University of Michigan. Then Doctor Prescott and I set to work in procuring back numbers and in doing this I found one of the many joys of my life. Emboldened by success we appealed to the librarian, the Library Committee and the Board of Regents saying something like the following: "We have so many copies of *Annales d'Hygiene*, but we need the back numbers and therefore we are asking for a special appropriation for this purpose." In some instances we had to repeat this request more than once, but we never tired in doing so, and in the end it has invariably been granted.

THIS investment has proved as sound as one in real estate, situated most fortunately. Indeed, many of these old books could not now be secured at many times the prices we paid. When Doctor Sewall came to the Faculty he became our coadjutor in this enterprise. When he left and Prescott was dead, this function developed upon Doctor Dock, and since he left it has been in the very efficient hands of Doctor Warthin. Doctor Lewis Pilcher and others have given the library priceless books and now the medical library of the University of Michigan is one of the best for research students in the world. If there be a great journal in medicine, including chemistry, physics, and biology, in the world, a complete set of which is not in the library, I do not know of it. I do not mean to say that this library has as many volumes as that of the Surgeon General or some others. There are many provincial journals, some of which contain valuable contributions that are missing altogether or in part. Many foreign government reports are lacking, and the same is still true, I believe, of the

transactions of certain learned societies, but Doctor Warthin is striving earnestly and intelligently to supply these deficiencies. The successive University librarians, Davis, Koch, and Bishop, have taken a pride in the medical library and have rendered it every assistance possible. It is now housed most commodiously under the direction of Miss Bethen. If the present and future members of the Faculty and students do not fully use it, it is their own fault. A medical school without a good research library is like an automobile without gasoline; it will not go. The library is one of the strongest ties that has held me to the University of Michigan when higher financial rewards tempted me to go elsewhere. It is a positive advantage to have it housed in the General Library since medical literature touches all other literature at so many points. This arrangement is good not only for medical students and professors, but for all those in other branches.

### Selecting a Faculty

GREATLY as I enjoyed filling out sets of journals, I enjoyed even more the selecting of new professors. There is no better index of the spirit of an educational institution than the character of the men chosen to fill its chairs. I had a long and interesting experience in this direction. The first time I had anything to do with this matter was when an independent chair in physiology was established in 1881. The selection was largely left to me because I was at that time teaching physiological chemistry, but it was necessary for me to convince my colleagues and superiors of the wisdom of my choice.



THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY READING ROOM IN THE '90's  
*The Reading Desks Were Overshadowed by a Plaster Cast from the Main Figure from One of Randolph Rogers Groups*

Doctor Sewall had already done creditable laboratory work, but he had had little or no experience as a lecturer and I did not know how he would get along with two or three hundred medical students, sometimes inclined to be playful, to use a mild term, but after hearing him through a partially open





THE OLD WOODEN HOSPITAL ON THE CAMPUS  
It Stood on the Site Now Occupied by the Chemistry Building

door for a few hours I had no misgiving on this point. Doctor Sewall came early early in the spring of 1881. The schedule was arranged for him to give a demonstration accompanied by a lecture three days each week to the freshmen, the higher classmen to be in attendance twice a week. When examination time approached in June, Sewall and I discussed the nature of the questions he should put to the students who had received such inadequate instruction. We could not hope that they had absorbed much of the knowledge which he had endeavored to impart to them. We decided that I should arrange an informal meeting between him and three of the best students in the sections to be examined. I sent to his room Frank Mall, afterwards professor of anatomy at Johns Hopkins; William J. Mayo, now the great surgeon; and Walter Courtney, afterwards in charge of the surgery of the Northern Pacific Railroad. Sewall soon ascertained that these men did not know much physiology, told them so, and predicted that no one of them would ever make a success in medicine. Several times in after years I had the pleasure of telling this story in the presence of Doctor Sewall and one or more of these students. Sewall admits that as a prophet he has not been a success. This confession,

however, does not invalidate my statement that as a physiologist he has had but few equals. I am ready to defend my assertion before any scientific court by presenting the physiological literature produced since that time.

**T**WENTY or more years after Sewall had been compelled by ill health to give up his work with us I received a call from a delegation of learned Frenchmen who introduced themselves by saying that they had journeyed to Ann Arbor to see the place where Henry Sewall had demonstrated that pigeons could be immunized to the venom of the rattlesnake, because they said that work had pointed out the way to the discovery of diphtheria antitoxin. Following Sewall's findings that animals can be immunized to snake venom, Roux and Yersin showed that the poison generated in diphtheria is similar to snake venom. Then Von Behring and Roux independently immunized horses to the venom of diphtheria and produced diphtheria antitoxin, an agent which both prevents and cures the disease. If all my subsequent selections of new professors had been as fortunate as my first, and many of them were, I should now feel that I had not labored in behalf of the University of Michigan Medical School in vain.

### Cunningham, 99m, All-American, and His Work in China

**F**ROM way off in the middle of Shantung province comes word from Michigan's first All-American, Dr. William R. Cunningham, '99m, who was center on the Varsity football team in '98 and '99, and has been in charge of the Raymond Memorial Hospital, Yi-Hsien, since 1904. Cunningham was chosen center on Caspar Whitney's All-America team for '99, which in those days had almost equal rank with

Walter Camp's selections. The latter also chose him for center on his second team. The following letter from Dr. Cunningham gives some particulars of his work in China.

When I first arrived in China in 1904, there were no railroads and the trip up to our station was made by boat on the Grand Canal and by mule cart, three weeks on the canal and two days overland by cart. Today you can get