

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT OF THE IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY.

BY S. W. HUFF, M. D.

The Medical Department of the State University is beginning to make a part of the history of that institution, and notwithstanding the briefness of its history, it seems to be not only not clearly understood, but misapprehended and misunderstood, judging from a few newspaper articles which have come under our notice. We propose to give the action which has transpired relative to it as we know it, and the reasons which influenced and determined action as we understand them.

In the enactment of the last (12th) General Assembly which appropriated twenty thousand dollars for the uses of the University, authority was given its Trustees to provide for "such other Departments as they may deem proper to establish."

Vested with this authority which reads very much like a mandate to establish other departments, the trustees at their annual meeting in June last established the LAW DEPARTMENT, drawing partly from the money appropriated by the State, and depending partly upon receipts to be derived from students for its support.

The chairs were immediately filled by competent gentlemen, and the department was opened at once. A success from the beginning. A class of twenty students have been pursuing their legal studies since the opening of the University year, under the instruction of the three eminent jurists who fill the respective chairs of the department.

At that meeting of the board which established the Law Department, the Medical Department was a subject considered, but its establishment was accompanied by greater and graver difficulties than of the former. And although the board were unanimous in opinion as to the desirableness of the department, which would complete the plan contemplated in the organic law of the commonwealth, in building up a University for the instruction and complete education of its youth, and also of the special necessity at this time, with as little delay as possible, of a first class medical school within

the State, and within reasonably easy access to those desiring to qualify themselves for the duties of that useful and honorable profession. The difficulties which confronted them seemed at that time insurmountable.

The department of medicine is of necessity larger and more expensive than any other single department. The greater number of separate sciences embraced within its curriculum of study, demands a greater number of separate chairs, each of which implies compensation to a teacher. Its prominent field of studies are such of the natural sciences, as require apparatus, cabinets of collections, material for physical investigation, and altogether require amplitude of room to give favorable facilities for the pursuit of the various branches, requiring an expenditure beyond the remnant of the appropriation left after launching the law department and meeting the incidental expenses of the institution for the biennial period to the next legislature.

The subject was therefore laid over without definite action for future consideration, and the board adjourned to meet in September.

September came, and with it came the Board of Trustees to the State University. A board nearly full. One member only being absent. The subject of the Medical Department came up in the regular order of business—of the “unfinished business” of the June session, and the board entered upon its consideration with views and purposes materially modified since that meeting. Approaching it not as then as a desirable end unattainable, but as a proposition reasonably feasible of accomplishment: for in the meantime many of the difficulties which environed its inception had been removed, or found removable. Thus: a large item in computing its expense had been the salaries of the professors of the seven chairs necessary to the department. But if seven competent gentlemen, such as the board would be satisfied to instal into the seven chairs permanently,—such as they should, after thorough enquiry become satisfied possessed the requisite qualifications for medical teachers, and should select for the positions; would be willing to discharge the duties of the introductory

term without pay for that term; trusting to the intelligent and liberal action of the next legislature, which would convene before the time for the opening of the second term, to provide for the future of the department, this the chiefest difficulty in the way was removed.

2d. Another item of expense of magnitude in the computation had been the procuring and fitting up of suitable rooms for its use. But it was now settled upon that certain rooms in one of the University buildings, could with but slight inconvenience to other University interests, be diverted from their present use, and appropriated to this, and with but a few hundred dollars expense, be conveniently fitted for its purposes.

3d. The splendid and costly chemical laboratory, apparatus and philosophical appointments of the University could by giving the professor of that department of the University charge of the chair of chemistry in the medical department, be made to wipe out another heavy expenditure always to be counted in making up the bill of items of a medical school; and at the same time give to the students of the department the benefit of the finest apparatus in the country, and talent of the highest order in this department of science.

Granting then that these points could be secured, the way seemed opened to its immediate establishment, with the same prospect of immediate success which had attended that of the law department, already entered upon its career of usefulness. The whole plan seemed practicable upon investigation, and at the conclusion of the deliberations of the board, the following resolutions were unanimously agreed to as a basis of future action :

Resolved, That there be and hereby is established a department in the University which shall be styled the Medical Department.

Resolved, That the Faculty of the Medical Department shall consist of the President of the University and the Professors occupying the several chairs of the department.

Resolved, That the chairs of the department shall for the present be styled as follows:

1st. Surgery.

2d. Anatomy.

- 3d. Materia Medica.
- 4th. Obsteterics.
- 5th. Physiology and Microscopic Anatomy.
- 6th. Principles and Practice of Medicine.
- 7th. Chemistry.

Resolved, That all tuitions and fees received from the students of the department, shall enure to the benefit of the department.

Resolved, That the several Professors in said department shall serve without compensation until such time as the Board of Trustees or the legislature shall provide for the same.

Resolved, That the opening of the department shall take place, if practicable, at the commencement of the University year of 1869 and 1870, and instruction shall be given therein until the last week in March, and so continue from year to year.

Resolved, That the immediate government of the department shall be in the Faculty, who shall provide all needful rules and regulations for the government of the department, and report the same to the Board of Trustees for approval, and shall at the close of each year report to the board the past operations and present conditions and wants of the department, with such other matter as they shall deem proper.

Resolved, That a committee of three, consisting of Messrs. Black, Bullis and Ross, be appointed, whose duty it shall be to recommend to the board the names of suitable persons to be elected as Professors in the department, and to make all other needful provisions for the successful opening of the department at the time above indicated, and to the end that the persons so recommended may have timely notice of their election, said committee, through their Chairman, President Black, shall report the names of the persons and the reasons of their nomination to each member of the board by letter; and it shall be the duty of each member of the board to endorse his approval or disapproval on said report, and return the report and endorsement to the chairman, and if a majority of the board shall approve of the action of the committee, then such action shall be taken as binding on the board, and the chairman of said committee shall immediately notify the Professors-elect of their election.

The committee appointed under this resolution gave earnest attention to the work of appropriately filling the chairs of the department, reduced to six by the adoption of the plan of establishment; the chair of chemistry, by Prof. Hinrich, being, as before indicated, a part of the plan submitted. Judge Dillon was at once and unanimously fixed upon for the additional chair of medical jurisprudence. We believe that these gentlemen both consented to give to the infant department the benefit of their great abilities in the respective duties of these positions.

Five chairs remained to be filled. Were there among the

medical men of the State, eminent for scholarly acquirements and superior intelligence in their profession, that number willing to give unpaid service for one College term of six months? It was believed they would in due time be found.

At this point, however, commenced the prime difficulty in the way of a speedy organization. Not for the want of applicants for the positions, payless though they were. That applications or consents enough to fill all the chairs several times over would be made or could be had, could not have been doubted by the committee, or, if so, not very long; but that men *fit* for the various positions, as teachers, could be found who could *afford* to give the time and service required unpaid, was the question of paramount interest to be determined. For this class of medical men are, as a rule, poor, the fact being well established that it is the adroit men,—the managers,—the tacticians,—the “strategists,”—the charlatanically inclined of the profession, and not its thorough students and men of learning, who, under ordinary circumstances, become rich from its practice. The *fact* of professional learning, implies an amount of time given to study, and physical investigation, and attendance to the details of scientific research, incompatible with that watchfulness of financial transactions and “sharpness” of business deal necessary to the acquisition and accumulation of riches.

One or two gentlemen of high professional standing and superior qualifications, signified their willingness to accept positions upon the terms proposed. It was thought others would, upon *call*, do likewise; but acceptances were few, and the presentation of testimonials came in slowly. However desirable the position may have been thought to be by gentlemen of the competent class of the profession,—for a call to a professorship in the medical department of the University of the State is not to be regarded indifferently or treated lightly by the lover of medical science or the devotee of professional practice,—as opening a field of usefulness not to be achieved in the ordinary routine of professional business; and also as placing him under the necessity of the pursuit of science with facilities for so doing which do not obtain in its

ordinary spheres of duty;—however desirable for these and other reasons, and however high his appreciation of the value, the dignity and the honor of the place, there is a *bread* interest to be first considered, and the old question of the “where withal to be fed and clothed” for himself and the dependent ones, before so great a change and so great a pecuniary sacrifice as six months absence or even abstinence from business, with its incidental risks and losses, are to be first settled in the mind before the acceptance can be given. And besides, the appointment carries with it the prospect of permanency—a permanent change of habits long established, and in some cases possibly a necessary change of home and associations cherished. At this date the chairs are not filled. That they will be with not many months delay, there are very good reasons for believing, within the knowledge of the Board.

During the first days of December, the Trustees held a third meeting. The Board this time came together upon call of its President, Governor Merril, for the consideration of several important matters relative to the interests of the University—concerning University buildings, and other questions which had arisen since its last meeting. At this meeting the committee appointed to nominate professors for the chairs of the medical department, took occasion to report their action, and its discussion was a part of the proceedings of the meeting. After mature consideration, action was continued by the adoption of the following resolution offered by President Black:

Resolved, That the Board reiterate their conviction of the necessity of a medical department in the University, and the desirableness of its equipment as the way may be opened up; but inasmuch as the meeting is by no means full, and the testimonials thus far too limited, the election of the several chairs is postponed to the next meeting, and the committee on nominations continued.

Thus ends action upon the subject, and in this stage of embryotic growth is the medical department of the State University.

We have thus followed, directly and succinctly, its history, keeping in view the exact action, and the reasons therefor, as we understand them. Whatever may be thought, even by

the enemies of the department,—and they are few—of the expediency of beginning its establishment at the present time, it will be admitted that the Board have pursued a consistent and undeviating course, going no faster nor further than facts and circumstances justified, taking no step backward, and with increased encouragement at every stage of the advance. That it is demanded by the necessities of the day, is equally patent to those who give attention to the State's educational wants; and at each step they have been sustained by approving words of the State's best men, both in public and private life, and by the press with much unanimity, and additionally entrenched in their convictions and judgment by every circumstance and every fact which action and investigation has developed.

Approving the action which has been taken, its friends throughout the State will patiently bide the fullness of time for the culmination of their work.

THE RED PIPESTONE QUARRY.

On the mountains of the prairie,
On the great Red Pipestone Quarry,
Gitche Manito, the mighty,
He the Master of Life descending
On the red crags of the quarry
Stood erect, and called the nations,
Called the tribes of men together.

* * * * *
From the red stone of the quarry
With his hand he broke a fragment,
Moulded it into a pipe head
Shaped and fashioned it with figures;

* * * * * LONGFELLOW.

[The following sketch of a trip to the celebrated Red Pipestone Quarry, has been furnished by the author in duplicate copy—one to the ANNALS the other to the AMERICAN NATURALIST, Salem, Mass., to be published simultaneously in the January numbers of each. The Naturalist will publish a diagram intended to illustrate the topography of the locality, which we omit. But it will be very well understood without it; and its absence will not essentially lessen the interest of the description.]—EDITOR.

A Trip to the Great Red Pipestone Quarry.

BY O. A. WHITE, M. D., STATE GEOLOGIST.

The Great Red Pipestone Quarry from whence the Indians occupying a large portion of the North American continent

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