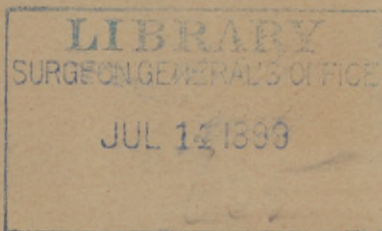


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1381

Rhode Island Med. Soc.  
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A STATEMENT  
OF THE  
LIBRARY COMMITTEE  
OF THE  
Rhode Island Medical Society,

May 1, 1883.

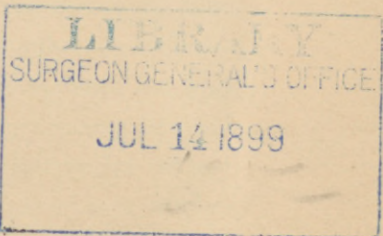




Societies, Museums

A STATEMENT  
OF THE  
LIBRARY COMMITTEE  
OF THE  
Rhode Island Medical Society,

*May 1, 1883.*



PROVIDENCE  
PROVIDENCE PRESS COMPANY, PRINTERS,  
1883.

The Library is open daily between 12 and 1  
o'clock, at Room 6, Arnold's Block, 54 North  
Main street, Providence.



THE idea of establishing a Medical Library, was first suggested to the Rhode Island Medical Society by Dr. Caleb Fiske in 1824, who donated to the Society a collection of books, accompanied with the following considerations :

“ Believing it to be an object of considerable interest, to establish a Medical Library for the use of the Society, and as no successful effort hath hitherto been made to effect so desirable a purpose, I am induced to commence the work by presenting to the Society seventy-two volumes, (including numerous instructive plates). This small beginning may serve as a nucleus for the accretion of useful matter, and it is to

be hoped will be followed with additions from time to time by the Society or some of its members. Such an establishment, by furnishing the means of intellectual improvement will probably excite a propensity for medical reading and research, and lead to results honorable to the Society and beneficial to the community."

Dr. Fiske was the fourth President of the Society. He was a surgeon in the revolutionary army, and for many years a successful physician in Scituate, this State, and founder of the Fiske Fund, which, according to Dr. Parsons, has already awarded thirty-two premiums for dissertations, and published and distributed thirty-one essays.

But the hopes of Dr. Fiske in the founding of a Medical Library were not realized. His gift received few, if any additions. The books became obsolete, superceded by more modern works, and were finally donated to the Rhode Island Hospital in 1868. The time had not come for a successful effort for the foundation

of a Library. After the lapse of a little over half a century the effort was again renewed.

At the December meeting in 1876 the idea of a Medical Library was revived. The few books belonging to the Society were scattered among its members and liable to be lost. The exchanges from other Medical Societies throughout the country were increasing rapidly, hence it seemed important that some safe place of deposit for these publications should be furnished, where they would be accessible to the members of the Society and form the nucleus of a library. Furthermore it was of the utmost consequence that the medical profession of this State, both for its own benefit and that of the community should have a Medical Library, containing valuable medical literature of this and other countries, and which should be a depository of the libraries of deceased physicians. Accordingly a move was made to bring about this most desirable object. But through the indifference of the many and the opposition of the few, it was not till two years subsequently that any import-

ant steps were taken for the formation of a Library. At this period in the history of the scheme it received a new impulse.

To the wisdom and generosity of DR. CHASE WIGGIN belongs the honor of suggesting and initiating a comprehensive plan for the formation and growth of a Medical Library. He said this was a subject that he had long had at heart, and, although it would never be of benefit to him, it might be of great benefit to others. He offered to give \$1,000 towards a building fund of \$20,000, provided the balance could be raised, and \$25.00 annually for ten years, provided an annual sum of \$600, could be raised for the Library. These conditions were subsequently accepted by the Library Committee, and they went to work to fulfil them. The plan and offer of Dr. Wiggin having been announced at this meeting, December, 1878, the Society was almost unanimously in favor of taking the necessary steps for the formation of a Library.

A Library Committee was chosen at the

annual meeting in June, 1879. As this committee was then constituted, with the exception of one change, it has continued up to the present time.

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#### FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

The physicians of Providence have quite uniformly contributed liberally towards the founding of the Library, pledging an annual contribution, for ten years, of from \$5.00 to \$25.00. One physician donated \$100, another \$50.

Physicians have paid into the treasury of the Library as follows :

The first year,	-	-	-	-	\$220 00
The second year,	-	-	-	-	335 00
The third year,	-	-	-	-	385 00
The fourth year, so far,	-	-	-	-	227 00
					<hr/>
Sum total,	-	-	-	-	\$1,167 00
Sum total given and pledged by physicians,					

\$3,060.00. Dr. Chase Wiggin has pledged his \$1,000, as he proposed, to the building fund.

We have received generous aid from persons outside of our profession. The following are the names and sums contributed :

The Hon. Wm. S. Hayward, \$50 ; Beriah Wall, Hon. Geo. H. Corliss, B. A. Jackson, Prof. William Gammell, Royal C. Taft, Dr. Wm. Grosvenor, each \$25 ; total \$200. Mrs. Elizabeth A. Shepard has donated to the Library \$125, and to the Building Fund \$500, and, in addition, has pledged an annual contribution for nine years of \$25, making in all \$850. We feel under great obligation to Mrs. Shepard for her liberal donations and the interest she has taken in the growth of the Library.

Amount given and pledged for Library and Building Fund, \$5,080.

Nearly all our funds designed for the Library are expended in books and in binding Medical Journals. Little goes for rent and none for the care of and attendance on the Library, this service being rendered gratuitously.

## LIBRARY.

The Library now contains 2,480 volumes.

There are 665 bound volumes of Medical Journals,

360 volumes of Transactions of  
. Medical Societies,

108 volumes of Hospital Reports,

90 volumes of Sanitary and  
Board of Health Reports.

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A total of 1,223 volumes of periodical publications of the greatest value, and which are in almost daily use as works of reference.

The remaining 1,257 volumes are classified by subjects, as books on Anatomy, Physiology, Chemistry, Therapeutics, Pathology, Surgery, Obstetrics, Ophthalmology, Dermatology, Diseases of the Nervous System, etc.

The Library is particularly well supplied with books on Surgery, including the works of the leading English and American authors. We have purchased full sets of the publications of the old and new Sydenham Societies, and besides the

beautifully illustrated folio atlases issued with their imprint we have many valuable plates and illustrated works relating to Diseases of the Skin, Anatomy, Operative Surgery and Obstetrics. We have imported several hundred volumes from England. The Library received, through the generosity of Dr. L. W. Clapp, 275 volumes from the library of his father, the late Dr. Sylvanus Clapp, of Pawtucket. Contributions of value have also been received from the heirs of other deceased physicians.

#### OUR WANTS.

In view of what we have already accomplished and of what we have yet to do, we feel that we can reasonably call upon our professional brethren for their continued and enlarged support; and we respectfully entreat all other persons who have an interest in the highest development of the medical profession, to aid us in this undertaking. It is not the medical profession alone who should feel an interest in the attainments of the large number of young physi-

cians now establishing themselves in our community. Every citizen who receives their ministrations is daily concerned in their proficiency; and he can fully appreciate the blessing of "the wise physician skilled to heal." The example of those who have so generously and appreciatively given us aid leads us to hope that our great undertaking will soon become a popular object of support.

We now need more extensive accommodations. Our shelves will soon be overflowing. The completion of our plans will give us a building adapted to the requirements of a library, and furnish a home for professional culture and improvement.

T. NEWELL, M. D.

H. G. MILLER, M. D.

G. D. HERSEY, M. D.

O. C. WIGGIN, M. D.

G. W. PORTER, M. D.

*Library Committee.*





