

markable growth of medical literature is well illustrated by comparing the reference on Syphilis in Vol. XIV. of the first series and in Vol. XVII. of the second; in the one there were 109 pages, and in the other 207.

It was always a marvel to Dr. Billings's friends how year by year he kept up the publication of the *Index Catalogue*, but he used laughingly to say that it was only a matter of organization; he read every page of the proofs, and the singular accuracy which characterizes the work is due to Dr. Fletcher and himself. As an outgrowth of this library work the *Index Medicus* of the current medical literature was started by Dr. Billings, and continued, after his retirement, by Dr. Fletcher.

Early in his career Dr. Billings became interested in public health and in hospital organization, and was in charge of the preparation of the vital statistics for both the tenth and eleventh census of the United States. Of the Johns Hopkins Hospital Trust Dr. Billings was appointed adviser, drew up the plans for the hospital, and was active in getting it organized. An important interview I had with his illustrates the man and his methods. Early in the spring of 1889 he came to my rooms, Walnut Street, Philadelphia. We had heard a great deal about the Johns Hopkins Hospital, and knowing that he was virtually in charge, it at once flashed across my mind that he had come in connection with it. Without sitting down, he asked me abruptly, "Will you take charge of the Medical Department of the Johns Hopkins Hospital?" Without a moment's hesitation I answered, "Yes." "See Welch about the details; we are to open very soon. I am very busy to-day; good morning"; and he was off, having been in my room not more than a couple of minutes. In the early days of the hospital Dr. Billings's counsel was always sought, and the growth of the school was a matter of pride to him. For years he lectured on the history of medicine. In 1891 he accepted the professorship of hygiene at the University of Pennsylvania, and became director of its new laboratory of hygiene. In 1896 he became director of the New York Public Library under the Astor, Lenox and Tilden foundations, and the crowning work of his life has been to consolidate these collections, and to see them housed in the magnificent building that was opened two years ago. The extent of the library may be gathered from the fact that it has more than 2,000,000 volumes and upwards of fifty branch libraries, with a staff of 1,002 persons.

In the foundation of the Carnegie Institution in Washington Dr. Billings took an active share, and for years he was chairman of its board.