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THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
PHYSICIANS.

BY J. E. GRAHAM, M.D. TOR., L.R.C.P. LOND.

The fifth annual meeting of this association took place on May 13th, 14th and 15th, in the Surgeon-General's library, Washington. It might be of interest to your readers to have presented a brief sketch of the new building, and of the library and museum it contains.

Both museum and library owe their existence to the civil war. In order to promote military medicine and surgery, Surgeon-General Hammond, in 1862, ordered "all medical officers of the army to collect and to send to the office of the Surgeon-General all specimens of morbid anatomy, surgical or medical, which may be regarded as valuable, together with projectiles and foreign bodies, and such other matter as may prove of interest."

For the purchase of books to be used for reference in the compilation of the medical and surgical history of the War, Congress made an appropriation of \$5,000 yearly.

Thus began both the museum and the library. They were for many years located in Ford's old opera house, where Lincoln was assassinated, but are now placed in a magnificent new building, for the erection of which, Congress, in 1885, appropriated \$200,000. The structure is of plain red brick, four stories in height, and made up of a centre building and two wings.

The centre building is 112x53, while each of the wings is 60x131. The museum occupies one wing and the library the other.

There are twenty-four persons employed in the library, and twenty-two in the museum.

The capacity of the library is for 170,000 volumes. In July, '88, there were 95,000 bound volumes, and 135,000 pamphlets. The celebrated index catalogue was commenced in 1880, and the 11th volume is now in course of publication. \$2,500 are annually spent in purchasing periodicals. The following figures will give an idea of the size of the museum. In July, '88, there were specimens of comparative anatomy, 1,687; specimens of normal anatomy, 2,961; pathological specimens, 8,354; instruments, 814; microscopes, 141; medals, 384; miscellaneous, 835.

Dr. Billings, the medical director of this flourishing institution, deserves the thanks of the medical profession of this continent, as to his efforts its present position is due.

The following is a brief summary of parts of the discussion of the Physicians' Association, which may be of interest to the general practitioner.

The proceedings began by the reading of a paper, by Dr. Reeve, of Chatanooga, on "Some Points in the Natural History of Typhoid or Enteric Fever." In the discussion which followed, Dr. J. C. Wilson spoke of the advantage of the cold-water treatment of typhoid.

Dr. Loomis said he had never seen a case of perforation in typhoid recover; but had seen recoveries from peritonitis. He had seen