[*Reprinted from* SCIENCE, *N. S., Vol. XVII., No. 438, Pages 813–817, May 22, 1903.*]

THE NEW MEDICAL BUILDINGS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO.

THE new buildings for the department of physiology and pathology of the University of Toronto, which are to be formally opened in October next, are the first to exemplify the unit system of laboratory construction proposed by Professor Minot,* of Harvard University, and consequently an account of them may be acceptable to all who are interested in laboratory administration and construction.

The main features of the unit system, as outlined by Professor Minot, are all comprehended in the character of the laboratory 'unit' room. This must, first of all, be no larger than is required to accommodate readily the maximum number of students whose practical instruction a single demonstrator can efficiently guide and control. It must also be of such dimensions that it can, at need, be made to serve as a museum, a library or reading room, or a small lecture room. The units, further, must be so placed with respect to one another, preferably in pairs or series, that, by the removal of the partitions separating them, rooms of larger dimensions may, when desired, be obtained at a minimum cost and in a short time. The dimensions of such a unit, as determined by Professor Minot, are 23 x 30 feet, and this room will accommodate twenty-four working students, which number, experience shows, is the largest that should be under the supervision of a single class demonstrator.

* *Philadelphia Medical Journal*, Vol. VI., p. 390, 1900; SCIENCE, Vol. XIII., p. 409, 1901.

The system, as may be seen, offers the great advantage of elasticity, for a laboratory director may enlarge or contract, at will, or according to the needs of the occasion, the accommodation required for a class, a feature that does not obtain in any other system of laboratory construction. It has also other and not less important advantages. The cost of construction is less than in any other system, it adequately provides for the all-important question of light, and it permits of subsequent extensions and additions without disturbance of the original arrangements. It is also to be noted that the system provides for the formation of smaller rooms through the division of the unit.

All these points were thoroughly canvassed when, nearly two years ago, the medical faculty of the University of Toronto took up the question of erecting new laboratory quarters for physiology, physiological chemistry, pathology and public health, and discussed the various plans of construction offered. The result was that the faculty unanimously recommended the adoption of the unit system for the proposed laboratories. The university trustees accepted the recommendation, and construction, begun in August last year, has progressed so rapidly that the buildings are completed and the equipment is now being put in. The whole is, therefore, at the moment in such a stage as to permit one to say to what extent the object sought has been attained.