

the recommendation is made at the session of the General Court, beginning Oct. 27, 1647, a few weeks later than the date of Eliot's letter, that—

"We conceive it very necessary y^t such as studies physick, or chirurgery may have liberty to reade anotomy & to anotomize once in foure yeares some malefacto^r in case there be such as the Courte shall alow of." *

Edward Johnson, in his "Wonder-Working Providence" (London, 1654), written about the year 1650, describes Harvard College at a period near that time, and says that "some help hath been had from hence in the study of Physick" (page 165). It is very likely that Cambridge was the place where Giles Firmin had "read upon" or lectured on his skeleton.

Even much earlier than this, at the very planting of the Colony, attention had been given to the need of physicians and the importance of medical knowledge. In the first general letter of instruction to Governor Endicott and his Council, from the Governor and Deputy of the New England Company, dated Gravesend, April 17, 1629, it is written, —

"Wee haue entertained Lambert Wilson, Chirurghion to remaine [with] yo^u in the service of the planta^{ti}on, wth whom wee are agreed that hee shall serve this Companie and the other Planters that li[ve] in the Planta^{ti}on for 3 yeares, and in that tyme, apply himself to cure but also for the Indians, as from tyme to ty[me] hee shalbe directed not only of such as came from hence for the geⁿall an[d] pticular accompts by yo^rselfe o^r yo^r successo^r & the rest of the Councell; And moreover hee is to educate & instruct in his Art one or more youths, such as yo^u and the said Councell shal[l] appoint that may bee helpfull to him and if occasion serve succeed him in the Planta^{ti}on, w^{ch} youth or youths fitt to learn that pfession lett bee placed wth him, of w^{ch} Mr Hugessons Sonne if his father approne therof may bee one, the rather because hee h[ath] bin trayned vp in litterature, but if not hee then such other as yo^u shall iudg most fittest &c." †

Here we have the germs of a medical school, which, to be sure, did not fructify at once. But who shall say that they were not fostered and kept alive during this long series of years, in a regular line of descent, under the various and varying fortunes of the Colony and Province, and finally developed into the noble institution known to-day as the Harvard Medical School? Whatever other responsibilities may

* General Court Records, vol. ii. p. 175.

† Suffolk Deeds, lib. i. p. xii.