THE BINDING INFLUENCE OF A LIBRARY ON A SUBDIVIDING PROFESSION

By Dr. HARVEY CUSHING

Learning as with water is never more fair, pure and simple than at its source.—Neuville.

The dedication of a library is usually a commonplace event which calls for certain platitudes, perhaps even a prayer. The generosity of the donor is praised, the genius of the architect; the educational needs of the people (other than those present) are recalled and assurance given that they will be met so far as a meagre endowment permits. Attention is next drawn to the novel features of the building and then, with some relief, all adjourn for lunch.

This, ordinarily, is the culminating feature of the programme, for Nature, while providing all alike with a ready impulse to consume food, omitted to equip most of us with an intellectual hunger whose recurrent pangs can be assuaged only by the consumption of books, the invention of which she could scarcely have foreseen.

1 Address at the dedication of the William H. Welch Medical Library, Baltimore, October 17, 1929.