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Biographical History of Massachusetts (Volume 3); Biographies and Autobiographies of the Leading Men in the State

Samuel Atkins Eliot

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This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1911. Excerpt: ... while both hospital and field work were carried on in a fashion far more effective than in the earlier days of the war. Dr. Porter's method of getting the hospital work he wanted was characteristic. Presenting himself at the Armory Square Hospital, he showed his credentials and asked the Chief Surgeon for work as dresser. He was told that there was no vacancy. Not discouraged, he applied again and again. At last he impressed himself on the surgeon in charge, who asked why he continued to apply. "Because I want work, and I'm going to stay until I get it," was the answer. "If that is the way you feel about it, we will put you on duty to-morrow," was the reply. Within a month he was in charge of a great ward full of serious cases, and at the close of the war was in charge of the officers' ward. Seventy-four compound fractures, requiring two daily dressings, fell to his share at one time. On June 1, with leave of absence, he came home to marry Harriet A. Allen, of Cambridge. He returned with his wife, and they remained in Washington until the military hospital was closed. Three years later he went abroad with his wife and two children, and studied for nearly two years in Vienna, Berlin, and Paris. He took up these studies just at the beginning of the new era in surgery. Lister was at work in Glasgow while surgical sepsis was raging through Europe. Anesthesia had encouraged painless operation, but asepsis was not yet known. Dr. Porter returned to Boston thoroughly equipped and then followed a series of events and appointments such as many a young and successful physician knows. He became physician to Out-Patients, Massachusetts General Hospital (1866); District Physician (1866); Physician to the Boston Dispensary (1867); Assistant Demonstrator of Anatomy (Harv...

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