St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, and its Connection with Eminent Book Collectors

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AHOSPITAL having over eight hundred years of history behind it quite obviously abounds in memorable associations with those who have served it during that period. St. Bartholomew's Hospital was founded on its present site in West Smithfield, London in 1123 A.D. and its general history has been narrated at length by Sir Norman Moore, and more briefly by Sir D'Arcy Power. Yet many aspects of its development await investigation, and an interesting volume could profitably be devoted to the personalities who have served the Hospital as physicians, surgeons, governors, stewards, and in other offices less dignified, but of no less importance. Any cursory examination of a list of prominent office holders is rewarding in names eminently distinguished in the history of medicine, and one is particularly impressed with the number of persons, associated in one way or another with St. Bartholomew's Hospital, who have achieved prominence as book collectors, bibliophiles, or founders of libraries.

Medical men have always been noted as collectors of pathological specimens, coins, medals, prints, portraits, and books, and L. W. G. Malcolm³ has thrown some light on that aspect of their careers. As bibliophiles they have achieved world-wide recognition, and the extent of their collections has been discussed by W. J. Bishop,⁴ and by the present writer.⁵ Yet it is difficult to trace the remains of certain of these formerly extensive collections, and many have totally disappeared. Also, we must not ignore the medical man who collected more books than required for a personal working library, but not sufficient to achieve fame as a great collector, and this category includes a goodly company. But their existence is difficult to trace where the books, suitably identified, are not housed in the great public collections, or at least have sale catalogues as memorials.

While the fame of the Bodleian Library at Oxford has spread throughout the world, few of us know much about the early history of the collec-

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¹ Moore, Sir Norman. The history of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. London, 1918. 2 vols.

² Power, Sir D'Arcy. A short history of St. Bartholomew's Hospital (founded 1123); past and present. London, 1935.

³ Malcolm, L. W. G. The medical man as a collector in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. *Med. Life*, 1935, 42, 565-620.

⁴ Bishop, W. J. Some medical bibliophiles and their libraries. J. Hist. Med., 1948, 3, 229-262.

⁵ Thornton, J. L. Medical books, libraries and collectors [etc.]. London, 1949, pp. 171-190.

tion or of its founder. It is of interest to recall the connection between Sir Thomas Bodley and St. Bartholomew's Hospital, as he lived for some years within its walls, and many of the books were housed there before being sent down to Oxford. It was in 1599/1600 that Bodley came to live within the Hospital, paying an annual rent of £5. 6s. 8d. for property then known as "The Great House." Sir D'Arcy Power reproduced a plan of these premises made between 1604 and 1613, indicating their position and showing a three-storey building with a courtyard in front and a small garden on the east side. A gallery, often referred to in Bodley's letters to Thomas James, his librarian, ran at right angles to the southern end of the house, was lighted by five large windows, and had chimneys. The books were stored in this gallery, and on November 14, 1604 Bodley wrote to James that he possessed "about 2,000 [books] already gathered in my Gallerie." Lady Bodley died in this house in 1610/11, a memorial tablet to her in the Parish Church of St. Bartholomew-the-Less, which is inside the Hospital grounds, reading: "THOMAS BODLEIUS/EQUES AURATUS/FECIT ANNAE CON-JUGI/PIISSIMAE, ATQUE/OMNIBUS EXEMPLIS/BENE DE SE MERITAE/CUM QUA DULCITER/VIXIT ANN XXIIII." Sir Thomas Bodley also died in "The Great House," on January 28, 1612/13, but was buried in Merton College Chapel, Oxford. He was attended by William Harvey, Physician to the Hospital, who must have appreciated the efforts of a kindred spirit in founding a library for scholars.

The fame of William Harvey (1578–1657) rests almost entirely upon his experiments on the circulation of the blood, and upon his two major publications, De motu cordis (1628) and De generatione animalium (1651). Yet he was also an eminent physician and research worker. Appointed Physician to St. Bartholomew's Hospital in 1609, he keenly pursued the duties of his office, but as Physician-in-Ordinary to King Charles I he was frequently absent. In 1632 Harvey drew up rules for the library of the College of Physicians, and had contributed £100 towards the cost of the site. Harvey was also a benefactor of the College by his Will, which reads: "Touching my books and household stuff, pictures and apparrell of which I have not already disposed I give to the College of Physicians all my books and papers and my best Persia long carpet, and my blue satin embroidered cushion, one pair of brass Andirons with fire shovel and tongs of brass for the ornament of the meeting room I have erected for that purpose. Item, I give my velvet gown to my loving friend Mr. Doctor Scarborough desir-

⁶ Power, Sir D'Arcy. Sir Thomas Bodley's London house. Bodleian Quart. Rec., 1936, 8, 203-205.

ing him and my loving friend Mr. Doctor Ent to look over those scattered remnant of my poor Library and what books, papers or rare collections they may think fit to present to the College and the rest to be sold and with the money buy better." Harvey's mention of the "scattered remnant" of his library refers to the incident in 1642, during the Civil War, when a mob raided his lodgings in London, destroying his invaluable manuscripts on the development of insects and on comparative anatomy, together with many of his books. The material that did reach the College of Physicians was destroyed during the Great Fire of 1666. William Harvey drew up a set of rules for the governance of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and these ordinances were still in use many years after his death. But he lived in unsettled times, and might have achieved even more honour had he been permitted to concentrate on his duties as Physician to the Hospital, or upon research work in the fields of embryology and comparative anatomy.

Although Francis Bernard (1627-1698) did not join the staff of St. Bartholomew's Hospital until after the death of William Harvey, there was some relationship between the two men, for we find that Bernard possessed a copy of Harvey's Exercitationes de generatione which had been presented to him by the author. Perhaps his passion for book collecting had shown itself as early as 1651, and was encouraged by the kindred interest of Harvey. Francis Bernard was elected Apothecary to the Hospital on May 22, 1661 from a total of twenty-six applicants, Bernard having a letter of support from the King. During the Plague, Bernard remained at his post treating the sick, the two physicians, Dr. (afterwards Sir) John Micklethwaite and Dr. Christopher Terne absenting themselves. On December 23, 1665 Bernard was awarded £25 by the Governors of the Hospital for remaining to minister to the sick during that period, of and doubtless his zeal influenced his later appointment as assistant physician. This took place on November 20, 1678, and it was most unusual for an apothecary to attain that position. Also in 1678, Francis Bernard was created M.D. by Archbishop Sancroft, received the same degree from Cambridge University, and became Physician-in-Ordinary to James II. He was appointed Physician to St. Bartholomew's Hospital on October 22, 1683.

Francis Bernard resided in Little Britain, just beside St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and there amassed an extensive collection of books. Moreover, he is reputed to have read every volume in his library! He knew Greek, Latin,

⁷ Power, Sir D'Arcy. William Harvey. London, 1897, p. 182.

⁸ Power, Sir D'Arcy. Ibid., pp. 99-103.

⁹ Moore, Sir Norman. Op. cit., vol. 2, p. 513.

¹⁰ Whitteridge, Gweneth. St. Bartholomew's Hospital and the plague of 1665. Part 2. St. Bart. Hosp. 1., 1948, 52, 32.

Italian, Spanish, and French, and was interested in a wide range of subjects. He was a great friend of Sir Hans Sloane, and one of his case-books is preserved among the Sloane MSS. in the British Museum. Bernard died in 1698 and was buried in St. Botolph's, Aldersgate, where his wife erected a monument to his memory, but this memorial is no longer extant. His books were sold by auction, forming the most extensive library sale of the seventeenth century. A list of the books was printed as A catalogue of the Library of the late learned Dr. Francis Bernard, Fellow of the College of Physicians, and Physician to S. Bartholomew's Hospital . . . Which will be sold by auction at the doctor's late dwelling house in Little Britain: the sale to begin on Tuesday, Octb.4,1698. This contains 14,747 works and 39 bundles, there being 869 books on Theology, 277 on Law, 938 on Mathematics, 4,484 on Medicine, 4,950 on Philology, etc., 1,163 in Italian, Spanish, and French, and 2,066 devoted to Divinity, History, etc. The preface to the catalogue reads:

We must confess that being a Person who Collected his Books for Use, and not for Ostentation or Ornament, he seem'd no more solicitous about their Dress than his own; and therefore you'll find that a gilt Back or a large Margin was very seldom any inducement to him to buy. . . . As for the Books of his own Faculty, tho' it be not an entire Collection (for who could, or rather, who would have one in Physick?) yet it may be said, that it is infinitely the best and largest that ever yet appeared in these Islands. . . . Certain it is, this Library contains not a few which never appeared in any Auction here before; nor indeed, as I have heard him say, for ought he knew, and he knew as well as any man living, in any Printed Catalogue in the World.

Misprints abound in the catalogue, which includes several Caxtons, the number and prices of which vary with the authorities mentioning them. De Ricci¹¹ gives 16 Caxtons, which sold for four or five shillings each; Lawler¹² lists 22 Caxtons with prices obtained, which total £4. 13s. 4d.; Elton¹³ mentions "thirteen fine Caxtons, which fetched altogether less than two guineas at his sale"; and Fletcher¹⁴ states that there were "about a dozen" Caxtons, which "sold for a little over two guineas." A priced catalogue in the British Museum would settle the matter, as it would that of the total sum raised, which has been given as about £5,000 (Lawler) and £1,920 (Fletcher), but the total of 15,000 lots renders it a task for an extreme enthusiast.¹⁵

¹¹ De Ricci, Seymour. English collectors of books & manuscripts (1530-1930), and their marks of ownership [etc.]. Cambridge, 1930, D. 32.

p. 32.

12 Lawler, John. Book auctions in England in the seventeenth century (1676-1700) [etc.] London (Book-Lover's Library), 1898, pp. 195-196.

¹⁸ Elton, Charles Isaac, and Elton, Mary Augusta. *The great book collectors*. London (Books about Books), 1893, p. 138.

¹⁴ Fletcher, Walter Younger. English book collectors. London (English Bookman's Library), 1902, pp. 112-113.

¹⁵ See also Thornton, J. L. In our Library. IV.

Dr. Edward Browne (1642–1708) was contemporary with Francis Bernard on the staff of the Hospital, having been appointed Physician on September 16, 1682, supported by a letter of recommendation from the King. He held office until his death on August 28, 1708. Edward Browne was the eldest son of Sir Thomas Browne (1605–1682), distinguished author of Religio medici. Edward attended the lectures at Barber Surgeon's Hall of Dr. Christopher Terne, 18 also Physician to Bart's Hospital, and in 1672 married the daughter of his teacher. Browne was elected Fellow of the Royal Society in 1667, and Fellow of the College of Physicians in 1675. He travelled extensively on the Continent, the letters between himself and his father written during that tour making fascinating reading, and upon his return Edward Browne published A brief account of some travels in Hungaria, Styria, Bulgaria, Thessaly, Austria, Servia, Carynthia, Carniola and Friuli, London, 1672. A second volume appeared in 1677, and both parts were published together in 1687.

When Physician to the Hospital, Edward Browne lived in Salisbury Court, Fleet Street, and built up an extensive, successful practice. He inherited his father's library on the latter's death, and in 1710 a sale catalogue of the joint libraries was printed as, A catalogue of the libraries of the learned Sir Thomas Brown, and Dr. Edward Brown, his son, late President of the College of Physicians. . . . Which will begin to be sold by auction, at the Black-boy Coffee house in Ave-Mary Lane . . . the 8th day of January 1710/11 . . . By Thomas Ballard, bookseller, [etc.], (London, 1710).17 Copies of this catalogue are extremely rare, there being only four known, one being in the British Museum, another at Worcester College, Oxford, a third at McGill University,18 and a fourth in the possession of Professor John F. Fulton of Yale. The catalogue includes 2,377 lots, classified by subject and subdivided by size, and it is probable that most of the items originally belonged to Sir Thomas Browne. Edward Browne prepared a copy of the first Pharmacopoeia of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and his MS. of this is housed in the British Museum. 19 When he died on August 28, 1708 he was President of the College of Physicians, having attained the highest distinction the profession could offer.

Charles Bernard (1650-1711), a much younger brother of Francis

Catalogue of Dr. Francis Bernard's library, 1698. St. Bart. Hosp. 1., 1946-7, 50, 100.

¹⁶ Edward Browne's MS. notes of these lectures are preserved in the British Museum.

¹⁷ Facsimile of the title-page of this catalogue is reproduced in Geoffrey L. Keynes' A bibliography of Sir Thomas Browne, Kt, M.D. Cam-

bridge, 1924, p. 184; also in, Thornton, J. L. Medical books, libraries and collectors [etc.] London, 1949, p. 177.

¹⁸ Bibliotheca Osleriana, 4532.

¹⁹ Reproduced in Church, Sir William S. Our Hospital Pharmacopoeia and Apothecary's Shop. St. Bart. Hosp. Rep., 1884, 20, 298-304.

Bernard, mentioned above, was elected Assistant Surgeon to St. Bartholomew's Hospital on November 13, 1683, and full Surgeon on August 26, 1686. He held this office until his death and was also Serjeant Surgeon to Queen Anne from 1702. Sir Norman Moore states that Charles Bernard was the first surgeon in England to have a good library and to have read it. Unlike his brother, from whom he probably acquired the taste for literature and learning, Charles also collected as a bibliophile and favoured well-printed texts in sumptuous bindings.

Charles Bernard was apprenticed on August 16, 1670 to Henry Boone, of the United Company of Barber Surgeons, and was admitted to the Freedom of the Company on December 4, 1677. He has been mentioned as the first Englishman to note that after an operation for cancer, the growth often reappeared.²⁰ The sale catalogue of his library was published as Bibliotheca Bernardiana: or a catalogue of the library of the late Charles Bernard, Esq., Serjeant Surgeon to Her Majesty. . . . With several MSS. ancient and modern which will begin to be sold by auction on Thursday, the 22nd of March, 1710/ 1. At the Black-Boy Coffee-House in Ave-Mary-Lane, near Ludgate Street, [etc.].21 The books are grouped under theology, medicine, history, classical, miscellaneous, mathematics, French, Italian, English, prints, and MSS., each subject being subdivided by size. There are 1,234 numbered octavo items, 953 quartos, and 686 folios, and the sale was lengthy and well attended. Swift records visits to view the books in his Journal to Stella under the date of March 11, 1710/11: "I went to see poor Charles Bernard's books, which are to be sold by auction, and I itch to lay out nine or ten pounds for some fine editions of fine authors. But it is too far, and I shall let it slip, as I usually do all such opportunities." And again under March 29: "I . . . went to see the auction of poor Charles Bernard's books: they were in the middle of the physic books; so I bought none; and they are so dear. I believe I shall buy none, and there's an end."

In addition to having had Sir Thomas Bodley living within its walls, St. Bartholomew's Hospital has yet another connection with the City of Oxford. John Radcliffe (1650–1714), who was responsible for the building and endowment of the Radcliffe Library at Oxford, was elected a Governor on September 13, 1690, when "a green staff was sent to him," according to custom. He had been educated at University College, Oxford, and practised there before coming to London in 1684 when he settled in Bow Street. There he built up a handsome practice and attended William III. He was Member of Parliament for Bramber from 1690 to 1695, and in 1713 sat in

²⁰ Moore, Sir Norman. Op. cit., vol. 2, p. 629.

²¹ A copy in the Library of the Royal College of Surgeons of England is priced throughout.

the House for Buckingham. On his retirement he recommended to his patients the then rising young Dr. Richard Mead. By his will he left most of his property to Oxford University, endowed two medical travelling fellowships at University College, and provided funds for the enlargement of the College buildings and for a library. Radcliffe Infirmary and Observatory were built, the Radcliffe Library being completed in 1747. His Will reads: "I give unto St. Bartholomew's Hospital in Smithfield, London, for ever, the yearly sum of five hundred Pounds, towards mending their Diet; and the farther yearly Sum of one hundred Pounds for ever, for buying of Linnen."22 This money is still paid annually to the Hospital. The Hospital also further benefited at later dates at the hands of the Radcliffe Trustees who in 1756 granted the sum of £2,250 towards rebuilding, and in 1822 the sum of £500 towards enlarging the theatre built to house those attending John Abernethy's lectures. John Radcliffe was no scholar but an eminent patron of learning, and he is said to have stated that his personal medical library consisted of "some phials, a skeleton, and a herbal."

Radcliffe was very friendly with Richard Mead (1673-1754), who took over his house in Bloomsbury Square on his death. Both served as Governors of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Mead having been elected to that office on March 11, 1720. The latter spent some time on the Continent after the age of sixteen, working at Utrecht, Leyden (where he studied medicine under Archibald Pitcairn), and at Padua, where he took a medical degree. Mead then returned to Stepney, setting up in practice in 1696. In 1702 he published A mechanical account of poisons, an abstract of which appeared in the *Philosophical Transactions*, and the year 1703 saw his election as a Fellow of the Royal Society. Also in that year Mead became Physician to St. Thomas's Hospital and was elected a Governor on his resignation twelve years later. He acquired an M.D. from Oxford University in 1707, was elected a Fellow of the College of Physicians in 1716, serving the College three times as Censor, and became personal physician to George II in 1727. Mead was also the author of De imperio solis ac lunae in corpora humana, et morbis inde oriundis, 1704; A short discourse concerning pestilential contagion and the methods to be used to prevent it, 1720, of which seven editions appeared in one year, two later editions also appearing; De variolis et morbillis liber, [etc.], 1747; and Monita et praecepta medica, 1751. Mead edited William Cowper's Myotomia reformata, 1724, and financed the publication of several other important works, including De Thou's Historia sui temporis, 7 vols., 1733.

^{22 [}Pittis, W.] Dr. Radcliffe's life and letters, 4th ed., London, 1736, p. 78.

Richard Mead was a great reader and collected together large numbers of printed books, statues, coins, gems, drawings and manuscripts, many of which were acquired in Rome. When he removed his home to Great Ormand Street he built a gallery to house the collection and employed scholars and artists to further scholarship. After his death the entire collection was sold, the Greek manuscripts being purchased by Anthony Askew. A catalogue was published with the title Bibliotheca Meadiana; sive catalogus librorum Richardi Mead, M.D. qui prostabunt venales sub hasta, apud Samuelem Baker; in vico dicto York Street, Covent Garden, Londini, dielunae 18vo Novembris, Iterumque die lunae 7mo April, 1755, the sale occupying twenty-eight days. The 10,000 printed books realised £5,518. 18s. 11d., and the total sales amounted to £16,047. 12s. od. Thus terminated the collection amassed during the lifetime of a man of whom Dr. Johnson once said, "Dr. Mead lived more in the broad sunshine of life than almost any man."

On June 21, 1733 Richard Mead had been appointed to serve on the Apothecary's Shop Committee at St. Bartholomew's Hospital in company with Sir Hans Sloane (1660-1752). The latter was also a great friend of Francis Bernard and had been elected a Governor of the Hospital on August 1, 1720. Sir Hans Sloane came to London from County Down at eighteen years of age and went to Paris, where he studied botany under Tournefort at the Jardin des Plantes. He then proceeded to Montpellier, where he studied natural science and took a medical degree at the University of Orange before returning to London in 1684. He then went to live with Thomas Sydenham (1624-1689) and assisted him in his practice. Sloane had become friendly with Robert Boyle and with John Ray. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1684, and three years later, a Fellow of the College of Physicians. In 1687 he went to Jamaica as physician to the Duke of Albemarle, spending some fifteen months studying the natural history of the Island. Upon the death of the Duke, Sloane returned to England, bringing over eight hundred specimens of plants in addition to animals, fish, birds, shells, etc. In 1693 he became Secretary of the Royal Society and revived publication of the *Philosophical Transactions*, which he edited until 1712.

Sloane was aided by John Ray in preparing his Catalogus plantarum quae in insula Jamaica sponte proveniunt, 1696, and in 1707 there appeared the first volume of his book, A voyage to the islands of Madeira, Barbados, Nieves, St. Christopher and Jamaica, with the natural history of the last of those islands, the second volume being published in 1725. He was created

a baronet in 1716, served as President of the College of Physicians from 1719 to 1735, and in 1729 succeeded Newton as President of the Royal Society, occupying that distinguished position until 1741. His appointment in 1740 as physician to George II crowned his career and in that year he retired from practice, taking a house at Chelsea. There he arranged his enormous collection of antiquities, coins, medals, seals, gems, natural history specimens, prints, drawings, manuscripts, and books. He possessed over 3,550 MSS. and 50,000 books at the time of his death, and these together with the rest of his collection were offered to the Nation in return for £20,000, a very small proportion of their value. This material was purchased in 1754 with money raised by means of a lottery and, together with the Harleian MSS. and the Cottonian Collection, was placed in Montague House, Bloomsbury, to found the British Museum. This was first opened to the public in 1757.

When Richard Mead died, he was succeeded in the book world by Anthony Askew (1722–1772) who acquired Mead's Greek manuscripts and many other items from his library. After qualifying M.B. at Cambridge in 1745, Askew spent two years travelling in Italy, Hungary, Athens, and Constantinople, and during that period commenced collecting the nucleus of his library. He received his M.D. degree from Cambridge in 1750 and soon afterwards settled in London. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1749, of the College of Physicians in 1753, and held several official positions in the College. On August 22, 1754 he was elected Physician to St. Bartholomew's Hospital and held that appointment until his death. He was also Physician to Christ's Hospital. Askew lived in Queen's Square, Bloomsbury, and was better known as a classical scholar than as a physician. He was a warm friend of Mead to whom he dedicated his only printed work, a specimen of an intended new edition of Aeschylus entitled Novae editionis tragaediarum Aeschyli specimen, 1746.

Askew is credited with having made bibliomania fashionable. He possessed numerous rare manuscripts and sumptuously bound books in his collection and many association items, such as a 1632 Shakespeare containing writing of Charles I, which had belonged to General Monk. He owned the first printed editions of most of the classics but, strangely enough, possessed not more than one hundred and fifty medical items. After the death of Askew his library was sold at an auction that lasted from February 13 to March 7, 1775. The catalogue was printed as Bibliotheca Askeviana,

²⁸ See Barnes, Henry. On Anthony Askew, M.D., F.R.S. and his library. Proc. Roy. Soc. Med., Sect. Hist. Med., 1916, 9, 23-27.

sive catalogus librorum rarissimorum Antonii Askew, M.D. Quorum auctio sint apud S. Baker & G. Leigh, in vico dico York Street, Covent Garden, Londini, die lunae 13 Februarii MDCCLXXV. in undeviginti sequentes dies. Entries were arranged in four alphabetical sequences, English, French, Italian and Spanish, and Greek and Latin. There were 3,570 numbered lots containing "the best, rarest and most valuable collection of Greek and Latin Books that were ever sold in England." The French bookseller De Bure, George III, Dr. William Hunter, the British Museum, the Bodleian Library, and Cambridge University made extensive purchases. A priced sale catalogue in the University of London Library indicates the sum of money paid for various items, the total sum amounting to £3,993. os. 6d. Askew was renowned for his hospitality and consorted with scholars from all over the world. He succeeded to the gold-headed cane which had previously been carried by John Radcliffe and Richard Mead and was to pass to William Pitcairn and Matthew Baillie before being presented to the College of Physicians by the widow of the last named.24

St. Bartholomew's Hospital has had intimate connection with book collectors up to the present day, and although we cannot deal in any detail with contemporary collections, such as that magnificent, well-selected, and beautifully preserved library belonging to Mr. Geoffrey Keynes, Consulting Surgeon to the Hospital, we must mention that formerly owned by Sir D'Arcy Power (1855–1941). This library was auctioned shortly after his death, a catalogue having been prepared by Messrs. Sotheby & Co. as Catalogue of valuable books, manuscripts, autograph letters, etc., comprising the property of Sir D'Arcy Power, [etc.], 1941. This reveals numerous early texts on medicine and surgery, together with valuable bibliographical tomes, but many of the items were eventually sold in a street market. Sir D'Arcy was a staunch Bart's man, intimately connected with the Hospital from the time of his entry as a student in 1878 until his death. A successful surgeon, he will be more prominently remembered as a historian of medicine, his writings on that subject being both scholarly and absorbing.

It is interesting to record the association of these figures with one institution and to note their relationship with each other. Probably bibliomania is infectious, for did not Sir William Osler transmit it to several of his contemporaries, including Harvey Cushing who was, incidently, a Bart's man by adoption, having been elected a Perpetual Student in 1922.

²⁴ See [MacMichael, William.] The gold-headed cane. William Munk, Ed. London, 1884.