

The Charing Cross Hospital Gazette.

Vol. IX.

DECEMBER, 1907.

No. 3.



Dr. H. M. Murray.

In Memoriam.

HUBERT MONTAGUE MURRAY, M.D., F.R.C.P.

It is difficult to conceive a more overwhelming loss which could have befallen the Hospital and Medical School than that which has recently occurred in the premature death of our Senior Physician, Dr. Murray. When he succeeded Dr. Abercrombie in that position in 1906, no one could have imagined that his tenure would have been so sadly cut short. All looked forward to a prolonged and brilliant career as lying before him, and to an era of increased prosperity for the hospital when his wise counsels should gain added weight from his seniority. These hopes have been cruelly disappointed, and we have to mourn a loss which at present seems irreparable—that of a skilled physician, a wise adviser, and a true friend to all who needed help or counsel.

Dr. Murray's medical education was obtained at University College Hospital, to which we owe other distinguished members of our Staff, Dr. Routh, Dr. Mott, and Mr. Boyd. At that school he exhibited the qualities which distinguished him in after life, taking a keen interest in the welfare of the place—showing himself an enthusiastic supporter of the Medical Society, of which he ultimately became President. He carried off the most distinguished prize open to students at University College Hospital, the Fellowes Clinical Gold Medal. After qualifying, he proceeded to hold the usual Resident appointments at his hospital, first becoming Out-patient Assistant to Mr. Streatfield in 1880, then House-Physician in the same year to Dr. Wilson Fox, and later, in 1882, House-Surgeon to Mr. Berkeley Hill.

His connection with Charing Cross Hospital dated from November, 1883, when he was elected Medical Registrar. Shortly afterwards he was appointed Electrical Physician, and in 1884 he was made Assistant Physician. To this office he added, in 1887, that of Pathologist, suc-

ceeding Mr. Stanley Boyd. In March, 1888, he was appointed Lecturer on Pathology, a post which he only relinquished in 1900. Promotion on the Hospital Staff seems to have been slow in those days, for Dr. Murray remained in the Out-patient department till 1903, a period of some 19 years, which to almost anyone else would have constituted a depressing experience. Meanwhile, he had been appointed Assistant Physician to the Victoria Hospital for Sick Children, at Chelsea, in 1889, succeeding to "beds" there in 1897, and becoming at once Senior Physician. At our own Medical School he successively passed through all the offices of importance, becoming Vice-Dean in 1890 and Dean in 1895. He also held the post of Medical Tutor (1891-1895), and Lecturer in Practical Medicine (1894-1895). As Dean he was distinguished for the wisdom of his rule, showing himself a firm disciplinarian when need arose, but a sympathetic administrator and a warm friend to all who appealed to him for advice, ever ready to recognise that rules are made for men and not men for rules, and that the worst foe to efficiency is bondage to red tape. In 1900 Dr. Murray succeeded to the most important Lectureship in the School, that on the Principles and Practice of Medicine, which he continued to hold till the time of his death. He became Senior Physician to the Hospital in 1906 on the retirement of Dr. Abercrombie.

Other appointments which he held were those of Consulting Medical Officer to the Foundling Hospital and Medical Referee to the Guardian Assurance Company. In 1905 he was appointed Clinical Teacher in Medicine to the R.A.M.C. He was also Examiner in Medicine to the Conjoint Board and to the University of London, and on the very day of his death a request arrived from the University of Liverpool that he would undertake the duties of Examiner there also.

As a boy at school he was Captain of his Cricket Eleven, and as a young man he was a great walker, making several walking tours on the Continent in his holidays. He was a skilful amateur photographer and brought back from his holiday rambles many striking photographs of Alpine and other scenes.

As a physician, Dr. Murray was careful and painstaking in his examination of patients, and his diagnosis founded on this and on a basis of sound pathological knowledge, was rarely at fault. His interest in the most recent advances in medicine was illustrated by his early attention to the use of x-rays in diagnosis, in the application of which he was one of the earliest workers in this country, while he had within the last few months of

his life furnished his consulting-room with a complete epidiascopic apparatus which he used for ascertaining the exact outline of the heart in cases of disease. As a teacher he showed to its full that rare combination of knowledge—not only technical, but of men and affairs, with that bewitching personality which, by making the listener feel himself in close sympathy with the speaker, produces such a vivid impression as can only be called into existence by such men.

Dr. Murray was a Fellow or Member of many learned societies and occasionally contributed to their Transactions. In the medical journals he was not a frequent writer, but when he was prevailed upon to publish a lecture or other paper, his work invariably showed acute observation and extensive knowledge of disease. His best known literary work is, perhaps, the Ninth Edition of Dr. Green's Pathology and Morbid Anatomy, which he almost re-wrote and illustrated with numerous drawings, mostly reproduced from photo-micrographs which he had himself taken. He also edited the Third Edition of Quain's Dictionary of Medicine with conspicuous ability, though his invariable modesty and consideration for others led him to limit his own contributions to that work to a minimal number of articles.

To give any account of the personal qualities which caused Dr. Murray to be held in such affection by all who knew him well is indeed a difficult task. Foremost may perhaps be put that wide-minded sympathy which enabled him to appreciate, not only the side of any question which he had himself adopted, but also the views of his opponents. He was thus able to exert a moderating influence in all the discussions and difficulties which constantly arise in hospital administration, and in which true objects are liable to be obscured by personal interests and prejudices. His advice was invariably given with a single eye to the interests of the institution, and carried weight, not only by reason of its wisdom, but also by its transparent disinterestedness. It was owing to these same qualities of sympathy and broad-mindedness that he was always the first counsellor to whom those in difficulties brought their troubles or grievances. His infinite tact and courtesy often rendered advice from him acceptable even when it ran directly counter to the wishes of its recipient. Ever ready to give way to the views of others if they were supported by superior argument, Dr. Murray yet possessed the rare gift of moral courage, enabling him to insist at due times on measures of public utility which yet roused vigorous individual opposition. A formidable opponent in debate, ready to take

advantage of any joint in his adversary's armour, his humour and kindness disarmed resentment and deprived a vanquished antagonist of all sense of the bitterness of defeat. A firm friend, ever ready to champion the cause of those whom he found worthy of support, he was incapable of taking any unfair advantage or suffering undue depreciation of others. Even if disappointed of securing his support, no defeated candidate ever dreamed of accusing Dr. Murray of breach of faith. He was the best possible illustration of the motto, "to thine own self be true: thou canst not then be false to any man."

Of the debt which the school at large owes to Dr. Murray there is no need to speak. We are only too conscious of the inadequacy of this sketch of one who had gained to so full a degree the regard and affection of all who knew him. His loss is so recent that we have scarcely had time to realise the extent of the loss which we have suffered by his death. That it will be difficult to fill his place is but too evident: the combination of qualities which he afforded was indeed rare. So far as this hospital and we ourselves are concerned, we may truly feel: "He was a man, take him for all in all, we shall not look upon his like again."

In adult life Dr. Murray's health was never robust, and during the last two years it had manifestly been failing. Symptoms of abdominal trouble arose towards the end of this last summer, and a holiday on the Continent, which he much enjoyed, failed to check the course of the malady. With his invariable unselfishness he made an effort to attend the Annual Dinner of the Past and Present Students of the Hospital at the beginning of October; but those who saw him then could not fail to be struck by the signs of grave affliction which he presented. He was unable to resume work at the beginning of the Session of the Medical School, being from that time forward practically confined to bed. He died on the morning of Monday, November 25th.

A Memorial Service was held on Thursday, November 23rd, at the King's Weigh House Church, of which he had always been a member; this was attended by his colleagues from both hospitals, by many of his pupils from The Cross, and by a large number of personal friends.

Soliloquised a student the other day: "Well, what difficulties these anatomists do make out of nothing. Fancy asking how to distinguish the external from the internal lateral ligament of the knee! It all depends which side it's on. I said it was on the other side, and he laughed!"

←* EDITORIAL *→

It is with deep sorrow that we have to record the death of Dr. Murray. Although his closer friends have probably known for some time that there was reason to be anxious, the news of his serious illness was a surprise to many of us, and his untimely death a shock.

DR. MURRAY was with us almost to the end. As recently as Dr. Addison's visit to us he was able to express his sympathy and congratulations. At the beginning of this term, with inspiring bravery, he gave some lectures and visited the wards, while he gave a solid and interesting contribution to this gazette only a year ago.

IN *our* late teacher's private life we do not presume to pry, but we have had opportunities of hearing the most eloquent tributes to his tender and affectionate, yet wise and strong character. Those of us who came into contact with him find this an echo of their own experience. Elsewhere will be found a brief account of his career and an appreciation of him, by one who knew him well, both professionally and as a friend.

WE warmly thank and congratulate those gentlemen who were responsible for the testimonial to Dr. Addison. The whole affair must be regarded as a great success; we believe that it left Dr. Addison with the feelings we wished him to have; it gave the students the opportunity they desired to give some memorable tribute—which, as Mr. Williams said, was "small in intrinsic value, but great in spirit."

It is—forgive us for preaching—it is no small privilege to this school to have men amongst us as students, who are so thoroughly capable of interpreting our wishes. The success of this affair is one of many tributes to that ability and desire to please which our club officials so uniformly show.

THERE are various changes in the Staff to report. Dr. Forsyth has been appointed to the post of Joint Lecturer in Practical Medicine vacated by Dr. Fenton. Dr. Eden has been appointed Joint Lecturer in Gynaecology with Dr. Routh. Dr. Lockyer now takes the Midwifery tutorials. Drs. Galloway and Macleod have been appointed Joint Lecturers in Dermatology.