

**Address of John Eric Erichsen, F.R.S., President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London, at the annual meeting, March 1st, 1880.**

**Contributors**

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# ADDRESS

OF

JOHN ERIC ERICHSEN, F.R.S.,

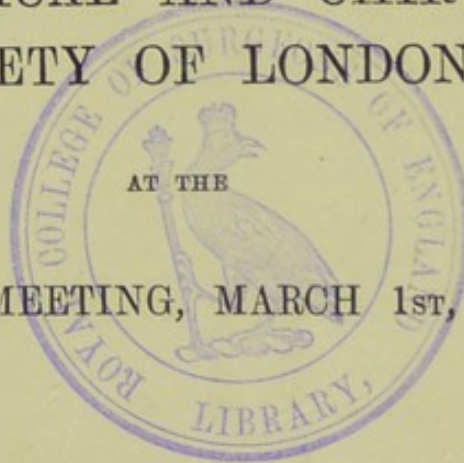
PRESIDENT

OF THE

ROYAL MEDICAL AND CHIRURGICAL  
SOCIETY OF LONDON,

AT THE

ANNUAL MEETING, MARCH 1st, 1880.



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ADDENDUM

JOHN ERIC JEFFERSON, F.R.S.

THEORY

NOTES, MEMOIRS AND CORRESPONDENCE

EDITED BY J. J. JEFFERSON

PRINTED BY J. J. JEFFERSON

(NOTE: THIS VOLUME IS NOT FOR SALE)

(See Preface for details)

NOTES

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## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

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GENTLEMEN,—I can with truth, as I do with pleasure, congratulate the Society on a year of continued prosperity and success. Its prosperity may be measured by the esteem in which it is held by the profession ; its success by the amount of work done. The result will be found to be equally satisfactory by whichever of these standards we test it. That this Society, the nearest approach that we have in this country to an Academy of Medicine, more than maintains the high character that it has held for exactly three quarters of a century in the estimation of the profession, is evident from the fact that the number of men who have sought the honour of its Fellowship during the past year has been unusually, indeed, almost unprecedentedly, large. The work done by the Society during the same period has been of a most important, in some respects of a more than usually important and enduring character. The Meetings have been well attended. The Debates have been animated,—that on the Report on Diphtheria, with which the session commenced and which was continued through several nights, excited much interest, not only amongst the Fellows, but throughout the profession, and was more than once prolonged to an unusually late hour.

The volume of 'Transactions,' for the interest, variety, importance, and quality of its papers, will bear comparison with any of its predecessors.

A great work has been brought to a close by the publication of a new Catalogue of the magnificent Library possessed by the



Society. For this Catalogue we are indebted to the unwearied exertions of the Librarians and Library Committee, but in a more special manner, and, indeed, mainly to the indefatigable zeal and literary ability of our Resident Assistant Librarian, Mr. Wheatley. This catalogue has cost much in labour as well as in money. The labour has been cheerfully given, but the expense of its production has for the time exhausted the available funds of the Society. Costly as it has been, it was only due to the Society, as the possessor of a library of which it may justly be proud, to give to the world a complete catalogue of the works contained within it; for, with the exception of the library of the Royal College of Surgeons, ours is the largest medical library in England, and, probably, so far as modern works are concerned, by far the most complete.

We have had during the past session to deplore the loss by death of seventeen Fellows of this Society. Some have gone to their rest ripe in years; others have been snatched from us in the prime of life by deaths both premature and sudden.

The obituary record of those Fellows who during the past session have been removed from the scene of their activity and usefulness has always constituted an important feature in the proceedings of the annual meetings of this Society, and although it must be admitted that in former days these records may have presented more of novelty, and consequently of interest, than can be claimed for them now, when the journals have anticipated, often by many months, the chief circumstances of the lives, and have passed the verdict of the profession on the labours of those who have been taken from amongst us, yet the custom is good in itself, is honorable to the Society as well as to those whom it affects, and affords the only opportunity that we possess of paying a just tribute of gratitude, of respect, and of affection, to those whom we have lost.

The first name that is inscribed on the mortuary roll of the present session is that of one whose death, premature as it was sudden, though not wholly unexpected, cut short a career of almost unexampled brilliancy, and left a void in the ranks of our profession that cannot readily be filled, for by the death of *Dr. Charles Murchison*, not only has British medicine, but



medical science generally, sustained a loss which, if not irreparable, will at least long be felt, but our profession has been deprived of a member endeared to a wide circle of friends by qualities that alike secured their affection and commanded their respect.

Dr. Charles Murchison, descended from an honorable and ancient Scottish family, was born in 1830 in Jamaica, where his father, a physician, then practised. The family, returning to the mother country, settled at Elgin, where Charles Murchison received his scholastic education. He commenced his medical studies at Aberdeen at an early age, and in 1846 proceeded to Edinburgh in order to complete them there. Here his brilliant career as a student gave early promise of that distinction which he was subsequently destined to achieve.

He was in due time elected President of that institution, which has been the fostering mother of many a budding genius in our profession, the Royal Medical Society of Edinburgh, and he was one of the founders and an active member of the Physiological Society. He graduated in 1851, receiving the graduation medal for his thesis on "The Pathology of Morbid Growths," thus early showing an aptitude for those investigations in which, in after life, he came, on all hands, to be acknowledged as a master.

At the termination of his studies, he led a somewhat erratic professional life, but it was one in which he found the germs of those inquiries which, in maturer years, were destined to bear such good fruit. In reviewing Dr. Murchison's subsequent professional career, it may be convenient to divide it into three epochs.

In the first of these we find him, although no longer a pupil, pursuing his studies with unabated energy, and pushing his inquiries into every department of professional knowledge. His studies, however, underwent a short interruption by his appointment as physician to the British Legation at Turin. In this capacity he spent some months in Italy, but the narrow sphere of so restricted a position had no charms for the active and inquiring mind of Murchison. He soon resigned an appointment that, to many of his age, would have presented social attractions which would have more than outweighed its professional disadvan-



tages, and returning to the more congenial atmosphere of the hospital ward and the pathological room, he plunged into the midst of hard, and in one sense unremunerative, professional labour.

He now became house-physician to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, where he had previously filled the office of house-surgeon, and, at the expiration of the term of his duties there, spent some time in Dublin in the Maternity Hospital of that city, afterwards proceeding to Paris to complete his professional studies in what was then acknowledged to be the foremost school of pathology in Europe.

The second epoch of Murchison's career now commences ; and, though brief, it undoubtedly exercised a deep and lasting influence on the direction of his studies, and led him to those researches with which his name will ever be inseparably associated ; for in 1853 he was appointed an Assistant-Surgeon in the then existing East India Company. In that capacity he proceeded to Calcutta, whence he was sent on to join his regiment in Burmah. He held this appointment for less than three years, resigning it, for what cause I know not, in 1855.

During this brief tenure of office, he found time not only to investigate the influence of the climate of Burmah upon the European constitution, but to study its flora and to contribute some interesting papers on its natural history to the 'Transactions of the Linnæan Society.' That his residence in India and his service in the malarial jungles and pestilential paddy-fields of Burmah, turned his attention in a special manner to those Fevers and diseases of the Liver which are so peculiarly fatal to Europeans in those countries scarcely admits of doubt, and thus he was enabled to lay the foundations of the great superstructure of his well-known works on these subjects.

Nothing illustrates more clearly the extent and varied character of Murchison's scientific acquirements, and the untiring energy of his active mind, than that he found time in the midst of his purely professional work to study the Botany and Natural History of the country to which he had been sent, and to take the duties of the Professorship of Chemistry in the Bengal Medical College at Calcutta, to which he was appointed on his return to that city.



We now come to the third and most interesting part of Murchison's career. In 1855 he established himself as a physician in London. On reviewing this period of Murchison's professional life, it is impossible not to be struck alike by the wide range of his pursuits and by the singular independence of action which led him to connect himself successively and in different capacities with four different Metropolitan Schools of Medicine. We have already seen how he taught chemistry at Calcutta, how he investigated the flora of Burmah, and wrote papers on its natural history, which were considered to be deserving of a place in the 'Transactions of the Linnæan Society;' in addition to which he was a geologist of no little ability.

In London he was at St. Mary's Hospital successively demonstrator of Anatomy and Lecturer on Botany; at the Middlesex, King's College, and St. Thomas's, he taught Medicine both systematically and clinically, and it was as a teacher in this latter capacity that he more especially stood pre-eminent.

In 1860, he was appointed physician to the Fever Hospital. Here he at once and eagerly seized the opportunity of pursuing and extending those inquiries which he had commenced in India, and the experience thus gained enabled him to elaborate his great work on Fevers. His labours at this time were increasing. He worked with great rapidity but with equal care and exactness. His contributions to the literature of our profession were numerous, as the subjects of which they treated were varied. It has been stated on what I believe to be good authority, that his published papers amount in number to between 300 and 400, and it is to be hoped that a selection of the more important of these may be made and given to the world in a separate form. To the 'Transactions' of this Society he contributed three papers. One of these, "On the Causes and varying rates of Mortality in different forms of Fever," may be considered as the foundation of that great work on 'The continued Fevers of Great Britain,' on which his reputation as a clinical observer and philosophic writer will ultimately rest. This great and elaborate work, and his almost equally well-known treatise on "Diseases of the Liver," evince in a remarkable manner the possession by Murchison of two qualities which are not often conjoined, but which



when united give "the ring of the perfect tone," the aptitude for original clinical and pathological research, with the patient study, the thorough appreciation of, and the profound acquaintance with, the labours of others.

That Murchison's character was public spirited and never self seeking, independent in thought and action, honorable in all professional relations, needs scarcely be said in the presence of those who had the great privilege and the happiness of knowing him intimately and well.

Stricken by an inevitably fatal malady, the remote consequence probably of repeated exposure to the pernicious influence of those diseases which his writings had so clearly elucidated, he yet continued unremittingly to work on in the cause of science and of humanity in the full consciousness that he might at any moment be called away. And I cannot picture to myself an instance of nobler endurance and more heroic fortitude, at least, in civil life, than that of the physician labouring cheerfully and stedfastly to relieve the sufferings and to prolong the existence of others, knowing himself to be the victim of a disease incurable by that very Art which he is exercising for the benefit of his fellow-sufferers.

Murchison died on the 23rd April, 1879, in the forty-ninth year of his age. He died as he had lived, and as he probably would have chosen his own end to have been, had it been in his power to control his destiny, for he died in the midst of that work to which he had devoted the best energies and the freshest years of his life. And in his last acts he ministered alike to humanity and to science by prescribing for the relief of a patient and putting on record a clinical fact by sketching a diagram of the disease for which he had been consulted.

Cut off in the prime of life, and in the fulness of his matured experience, the death of Murchison has left a gap in the ranks of great clinical physicians which will be more deeply felt as time rolls on, when those who now occupy the foremost place will have passed away, and when a full share of the burden of the day which they now so nobly bear would have fallen to the lot of, and been not unworthily sustained by Murchison.

*Mr. Jesse Leach* entered the medical profession in 1834. He



soon afterwards settled in practice at Heywood, in Lancashire, where he resided up to the time of his death on February 27th, 1879, in his sixty-seventh year. He became a Fellow of this Society in 1843, and of the College of Surgeons in 1856. That he was successful as a practitioner, and that his professional abilities and general character were alike appreciated and esteemed in his own locality there can be little doubt, for we find that he was appointed a Justice of the Peace in the County of Lancashire, and held other offices of trust. In early life he devoted himself with energy to the practice of surgery, and published, between the years 1838 and 1843, some interesting papers on "Burns and Scalds," and on the "Treatment of Amputation Stumps by means of Irrigation and Water-dressing," a simple method then much in vogue, which he strongly advocated, and from which he had obtained excellent results.

Of *Dr. William Reeves* but little is known to me, and probably to the Fellows of the Society, except that he became a member of the College of Surgeons in 1838, an M.D. of St. Andrews in 1870, and a Fellow of this Society in 1869. He practised successfully in Carlisle, where he died on the 28th April, 1879, having been appointed consulting surgeon to the Carlisle Dispensary some time previously.

It is seldom that we meet with a man who combines an aptitude for surgery with a capacity for mathematics, but in *Mr. Charles Brooke* this very unusual conjunction of mental qualities existed in a striking manner.

Educated at Cambridge, where he obtained his degree as Master of Arts, he came out as a wrangler in the mathematical tripos of 1827. He relinquished a University career, which had thus been opened up to him, and entered upon the study of medicine, becoming a member of the College of Surgeons in 1834 and a Fellow in 1844.

He engaged in surgical practice in London, was appointed surgeon to the Metropolitan Free Hospital, and soon afterwards became attached to the Westminster Hospital, with which institution his connection continued for nearly forty years. He was elected a Fellow of this Society in 1844, and filled successively the offices of Councillor, Librarian, and Vice-President. He



took a warm interest in its affairs, and was a frequent attendant at the meetings.

Mr. Brooke, who was one of the Librarians at the time of the alteration of the Library and the building of the New Reading-room, contributed very valuable assistance to the preparation of the plans and the superintendence of the works, making useful practical suggestions which were advantageously adopted.

Although for many years a hospital surgeon, it was not in surgery that Charles Brooke was destined to achieve distinction—not that he was deficient in those qualities which tend to constitute a good surgeon, far from it, he was a dexterous operator, an ingenious mechanic, and possessed a fair insight into the nature of disease. He was, indeed, a pioneer in one department of surgery which, in later years and in other hands, was destined to achieve large proportions, namely, the treatment of Cleft-Palate and various forms of fistula. In the earlier part of his career he operated much and successfully for the cure of these conditions, inventing that ingenious mechanism, the “bead suture.” By its means he succeeded in obtaining results which were, at that period in the history of plastic surgery, justly considered as being of a highly satisfactory character. But Charles Brooke’s mind had a natural bent to the study of mathematics and physical science, and it is almost matter of regret that one so gifted as he undoubtedly was in these directions should have had his attention even temporarily turned aside to the practice of the surgeon, which has so little in common with the more exact studies of the mathematician. He did not write much, but all his published works have reference to these, his more congenial studies. He brought out a ‘Synopsis of Pure Mathematics,’ and later on edited the fourth and fifth editions of a work originally written by Dr. Golding Bird, entitled ‘The Elements of Natural Philosophy, or the Introduction to the Study of the Physical Sciences.’ The progress of physical science is so rapid that it soon became necessary to re-write the work. This was done in its sixth edition by Mr. Brooke, without any detriment to its popularity. Original in thought, elegant in diction, and fertile in illustration, the work is probably the best treatise in the English language for the use of the medical or, indeed, of the general student in natural philosophy.



In physical science Mr. Brooke's greatest achievement was the invention of a process of self-registration of the magnetic needle by means of photographic appliances, an invention which he subsequently adapted to the barometer and thermometer. For this important invention Mr. Brooke was awarded the premium offered by Government, and he received at the exhibition of 1851 the Council medal.

The latter years of Charles Brooke's life were spent in scientific leisure. Untrammelled by professional ties and fond of travel, he visited various parts of Europe. Amiable, single-minded and genial, always ready and, indeed, fond of imparting to others his stores of varied knowledge, Charles Brooke passed through life without an enemy. He went to his rest, while spending the spring months on the south coast of England, on the 17th May, 1879, regretted most by those who knew him best.

*Dr. Tilbury Fox*, the son of a well-known and highly-esteemed medical practitioner, was born at Broughton in 1836. He commenced his medical studies in 1853 at University College, and, after having passed through a brilliant career as a student, graduated in honours at the University of London in 1858. Like many other men who have subsequently distinguished themselves in a special line of professional work, Dr. Tilbury Fox was somewhat discursive in the early part of his career. He commenced practice in 1859 as a partner of Mr. Tapson, of Gloucester Crescent, and at this time paid much attention to midwifery and its concomitant diseases, publishing essays on "Phlegmasia Dolens" and "Puerperal Fever;" but he soon relinquished this department of practice, and after a lengthened tour in the East as medical attendant on a Scottish nobleman, he again settled in London, this time as a physician, devoting himself exclusively to dermatology. In 1864 he published a work on 'The Parasitic Diseases of the Skin.' This treatise was the first which, in our language, placed this important class of diseases in a clear and concise manner before the profession. It was followed by many papers and essays on Cutaneous Diseases, and in a few years by a complete work on the 'Diseases of the Skin,' which, written with much clearness and in a thoroughly practical manner, soon passed through several editions. He was now appointed physi-



cian to the skin department in University College Hospital, to the duties of which he devoted himself with great energy, and established a very elaborate and complete system of baths in connection with it.

Dr. Tilbury Fox, however, possessed too energetic a nature to be content with the comparatively narrow range of thought and restricted professional action afforded by a specialty. He threw himself with characteristic zeal into the vortex of medical journalism, and took a prominent and active part in the proceedings of convocation at the University of London, where he especially distinguished himself by his strenuous efforts to prevent the admission of women to the medical examination, and the assumption by them of medical degrees.

Dr. Tilbury Fox was deservedly a great favourite with all who knew him. His cheerful temperament and genial manners, his manly, energetic, and thoroughly honorable character, made him popular alike with his professional brethren and with his patients. He died suddenly in his forty-third year, on June 7th, 1879, whilst on a holiday excursion to Paris. His death was occasioned by heart disease, from which he had suffered for several years; but the knowledge of the inevitable doom that impended over him, and which might at any moment fall upon him, neither shook his courage nor affected his composure, nor did it even cloud his cheerfulness. With undaunted steadfastness he worked on, never faltering in his course, never seeking by rest to prolong an existence which would have been burdensome to himself when no longer vivified by the stimulus of active and useful work. Waiting for that death which he full well knew could not long be delayed, and might at any moment occur, he prepared himself for the inevitable, and met his fate in the prime of manhood, without a murmur of regret, and in perfect resignation.

*Mr. Samuel Wood* was educated at University College. On the completion of his medical studies in 1837 he established himself at Shrewsbury, where he became surgeon to the Salop Infirmary, and to the County Lunatic Asylum. He was admitted a Fellow of this Society in 1872. Mr. Wood published a few papers on surgical subjects in the weekly journals, one especially, on the "Division of the implicated Nerve in Traumatic Tetanus,"



is of interest, and he devised a method for the radical cure of femoral hernia. It was not, however, so much as an operating surgeon that Mr. Wood excelled as for his diagnostic skill and for his aptitude in the use of remedies. But his tastes and studies led him beyond the limits of professional work. He devoted much time to the study of archæology, more especially to numismatics. He made a large collection of coins, became a Member of the Numismatic Society of London, and acquired a considerable local reputation as a high authority on the antiquities of his native district. He was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and an F.S.S. He died on June 19th, 1879, in his sixty-seventh year.

*Dr. Patrick Black*, born at Aberdeen in 1813, was educated at Eton and subsequently went to Oxford, where he took his M.D. degree in 1839. He studied medicine at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, with which institution he continued to be connected through the whole of his professional life. Passing through the various subordinate grades, he was appointed physician to it in 1860, and lecturer on medicine shortly afterwards. Dr. Black was for many years physician to the Dreadnought Hospital, and to other public bodies. The abundant opportunities afforded by these great fields of study and of observation appear to have been little utilised by Dr. Black, for he contributed but scantily to professional knowledge, either in its scientific or practical departments. He wrote but little. His best known publications are some ingenious, but speculative, essays on "Respiration" and "the Uses of the Spleen," and a paper on "Scurvy in High Latitudes," in which he attempted to explain the medical failure of the Arctic Expedition of 1875-6. In his own school he had the reputation of being a careful diagnostician and an able physician. He devoted, at one time, much attention to the administration of anæsthetics, and was exceptionally successful in their use. A fine scholar, a man of cultivated taste, an accomplished gentleman, elegant in person and refined in manner, Dr. Black was the type of the courtly physician of the past rather than of the active and inquiring man of science of the present generation. He died after a most painful illness, borne with much courage



and resignation on October 11th, 1879, in his sixty-sixth year.

*Mr. Alfred Keyser* was educated at University College, and established himself in practice in London in 1840. He became a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1845, and of this Society in 1847. I knew him well and intimately, and can truly say that he was, in all relations of life, a man of the most honorable and upright character. He was much and justly respected by a circle of patients, more select than numerous, to whom he devoted himself with untiring assiduity. He died in October last in the sixty-fifth year of his age of a painful and lingering illness, from the effects of which he suffered for nearly two years before it proved fatal.

*Dr. Arthur Leared* was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he graduated in Arts and Medicine. He practised for a time in Ireland, but soon sought the wider field of London professional life. On the outbreak of the war in the Crimea he was appointed one of the physicians to the civil hospital established at Scutari. In 1856, after the capture of Sebastopol, he returned to London, and recommenced practice as a metropolitan physician. He was soon afterwards appointed to the Great Northern Hospital, and published several treatises on medical subjects, one of which, on "The Causes and Treatment of Imperfect Digestion" has passed through six editions, and added much to the author's reputation and practice.

But it can scarcely be said that it was in medicine that Dr. Leared stood pre-eminent, for, able and skilful as he undoubtedly was as a physician, it was rather as a man of letters and of general science that he made his mark. He was an accomplished linguist and an enterprising traveller, not a mere holiday tourist, but one who travelled not only for recreation and self-instruction, but in order to add to the general stock of geographical knowledge. As an instance of Dr. Leared's ability as a linguist and enterprise as a traveller, it may be stated that he made a prolonged tour in Iceland and so thoroughly mastered the language of that island, that he published in the vernacular a treatise on a peculiar form of cystic disease which appears to be prevalent there.



In 1872 he travelled to Morocco, penetrated, at no slight amount of personal peril, to the capital of the Moors, and on his return to England, published a very interesting work on that little-visited country. This book, which is written with much spirit and elegance, contains the fullest and in all respects the most accurate account that we possess of Morocco and of the Moors in their social and political relations.

It was on the occasion of a second visit to Tangiers, in the autumn of last year, that Dr. Leared contracted fever, under which his constitution, already weakened by chronic renal disease, gave way, and he died shortly after his return to London, on the 16th October, 1879.

Dr. Leared was a member of several societies outside the profession, and his varied accomplishments, extended and versatile knowledge, gained him a large number of friends in literary, scientific, and artistic circles.

By the death of *George William Callender* British Surgery has sustained a grievous loss. Born at Clifton in 1830, he received his medical education at St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Mr. Callender evinced an early and decided taste for anatomical research and for surgical practice. He gradually worked his way up the ladder of promotion, passing through the usual subordinate grades, until he became full surgeon in 1871, and lecturer on surgery in 1873. He contributed largely to the 'St. Bartholomew's Hospital Reports,' of which he was for several years the surgical editor, and read some papers on anatomical subjects before the Royal Society, which gained for him the Fellowship of that distinguished body.

But, valuable as was Mr. Callender's work as a practical surgeon, and able as may have been his scientific researches, it was not by them that he made his mark and placed himself in the foremost rank of British surgeons of his day. Callender's great merit consisted in this, that he strove, and with conspicuous success, to improve the results of operations, and to lessen the rate of mortality that had long prevailed in the surgical wards of hospitals. He recognised fully the important facts that the prospect of recovery after the greater operations and more serious injuries depended mainly on the care taken of the



wound, and on the attention paid to the hygienic surroundings of the patient. He devised a systematic method of treating wounds antiseptically, which possessed the great merit of being uncomplicated in its details, and consequently easy of application. By ensuring complete physiological rest of the injured parts by thorough drainage, by dressing the wound with the most scrupulous attention to cleanliness, and in the gentlest and least painful manner, Callender undoubtedly obtained most striking results, and reduced the mortality due to septic diseases to an extent previously unknown in the hospitals of London, though he may not have attained the end which, with pardonable enthusiasm, he had hoped to reach of making pain and death unknown results of modern surgical practice.

Callender's well-knit frame, his upright and manly bearing and distinguished presence, gave promise of long years of active professional usefulness, but he unfortunately became the victim of an insidious renal disorder which, being acutely aggravated during an autumn holiday spent in the United States, proved rapidly fatal during his homeward voyage. He died on board ship on the 20th of October, 1879, in his 49th year, honoured for his sterling worth and great professional qualities by his surgical brethren on both sides of the Atlantic, and beloved for his genial character and amiable disposition by all who knew him.

*Mr. John Soelberg Wells*, born at Norwich about the year 1835, was educated at the University of Edinburgh, where he graduated in 1856. Showing an early taste for ophthalmological studies, he went to Berlin, where he associated himself with Von Gräfe, to whom, for several years, he acted as assistant. He afterwards studied under Donders at Utrecht, and returning to this country became attached to the Royal Ophthalmic Hospital, where, after some years service, he was appointed full surgeon in 1873. He also held the posts of Professor of Ophthalmology in King's College and of Ophthalmic Surgeon to the Hospital.

That Mr. Soelberg Wells was an able and accomplished ophthalmologist there can be no doubt. His long residence in the best schools of eye surgery in Germany, and his thorough, and in some degree hereditary, knowledge of the language of



that country, made him familiar with the most approved methods of ophthalmic surgery as practised at Berlin and Vienna, as well as with its science and its literature. His papers in the 'Ophthalmic Hospital Reports,' and his two works, 'A Treatise on Diseases of the Eye,' and on 'Long, Short, and Weak Sight,' which passed through several editions, familiarised English surgeons with the more advanced continental views on ophthalmology.

Mr. Soelberg Wells was a man of refined and cultivated tastes, genial character, and social habits. Labouring under the great professional disadvantage of being the possessor of an ample fortune, he cared little for practice, but rather devoted himself to the cultivation of the science and literature of his department of surgery.

Mr. Wells' fine physique gave promise of long life, but the promise was delusive, for failing health compelled him last year to relinquish all work, and going to Cannes, in the vain hope of recruiting his shattered constitution, he died there on the 2nd of December, 1879, in his forty-fourth year.

Of *Dr. Frederick Collins*, who died on December 9th, 1879, aged fifty-three, there is little more to be said, than that he passed many years of his life as a practitioner at Wanstead.

*Dr. D. M. Maclure* died on the 13th December, 1879, in his fifty-fourth year. In early life he had travelled much, and passed several years in the East. On his return to London he became lecturer on physiology at the Westminster Hospital, and was appointed assistant physician to the National Hospital for Paralysis and Epilepsy. He was, however, chiefly known to the profession and to the public as the medical officer of the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company. The duties of this office he discharged alike with consideration to the interests of the Company and kindness to those who, victims of the negligence of its servants, sought compensation at its hands. He contributed little, if anything, to the literature of our profession.

We have lost one of the oldest Fellows, the oldest but three of this Society, in the person of *Mr. Richard Francis George*, whose election to its Fellowship dates as far back as the year 1821.



He became a member of the Royal College of Surgeons in the preceding year, and died on the 4th of December last at Weston-super-Mare, at the advanced age of eighty-one. He practised honorably for many years at Bath, where he served various municipal and public offices, unconnected, however, with the profession.

There have been few English physicians practising on the Continent who were better known to the travelling valetudinarian than *Dr. Thomas Cutler*, of Spa. Truly cosmopolitan, educated in London, in Brussels, and in Paris, connected by the closest professional ties with this country, yet commencing active life as a surgeon in the Belgian army at the siege of Antwerp, he eventually settled at Spa, where, for more than one-third of a century, his advice was eagerly sought by all, of whatever nationality, who hoped to renovate health and restore strength by the aid of those chalybeate springs from which all other watering places derive their generic appellation.

Dr. Cutler did good service at Spa in more ways than by strictly professional work. By his energetic activity, he effected various improvements in the town which secured its prosperity by making it a favoured health resort to many of his fellow-countrymen. He very carefully studied the effects of its mineral waters, and published a valuable treatise on their uses, the best evidence of the popularity of which is that it has reached its tenth edition. He died last winter at Spa, regretted alike by the natives of the town he had so much benefited, and by the strangers whom he had attracted to it for the advantage of his professional advices.

*Mr. Henry Hancock*, born in London in 1809, received his medical education at the Westminster Hospital, which, half a century ago, when such men as the elder Lynn, Anthony White, and James Guthrie were members of its staff, ranked as one of the best surgical schools in the country. It is not, however, with the Westminster Hospital that Hancock's name has been associated. He never became a member of its surgical staff, but, connecting himself early in his professional career with the newly-established hospital at Charing Cross, did much by his ability, his energy, and his active business habits, to gain for it an



honorable place amongst the schools of medicine of the metropolis. To this hospital he was attached during the whole of his active professional life, and on him for many years mainly rested its surgical reputation; and this he was well able to sustain, for Hancock was an excellent practical surgeon, a skilful and keen operator;—in his early days a great excisor of jaws and of joints, and an impressive and able teacher of his art. To eye surgery Hancock, influenced doubtless by the example of his friend and master, Guthrie, paid the closest attention. He was for many years one of the surgeons of the Westminster Ophthalmic Hospital, and had he thought fit to devote himself specially to the eye, would doubtless have obtained a high position amongst the most distinguished ophthalmologists of the day.

Mr. Hancock took an active share in the work of the College of Surgeons, to the council of which he was elected in 1863. He became "Arris and Gale Lecturer" in 1865, was an active member of the court of examiners, attained to the dignity of president in 1872, and was appointed Hunterian orator in the following year. He took the warmest interest in the prosperity of this the greatest surgical institution in this or in any other country. He looked with the utmost jealousy upon, and resisted in the most strenuous manner, any attempt which appeared to him to be likely to lessen its influence or to restrict its utility. But though conservative in his views, he was not opposed to reasonable advance, or to an adaptation of old methods to more modern requirements. An excellent man of business, a keen debater, active and energetic, thoroughly honorable and just, Hancock's influence on the Council was deservedly great, and his loss will long be felt in its deliberations. After serving the office of President in 1872-3, he gradually withdrew from the active practice of his profession, and died on the 1st of January last, of malignant disease of the pylorus, in his seventy-first year, at his country residence at Chute, in Wiltshire.

By the death of *Dr. Edward Cator Seaton* the medical officer of the Local Government Board, the public service has lost a most useful and meritorious member. Born at Rochester in 1815, he studied in Edinburgh, where he graduated in 1837. He commenced his professional life in general practice, first at



Rochester, in conjunction with his father, a retired naval surgeon, and subsequently in Sloane Street. Although successful as a practitioner and much respected by his patients, his heart does not appear to have been in work of this kind. He soon began to devote himself to hygiene and preventive medicine, subjects which at that time were rising into professional notice. He became an early and active member of the Epidemiological Society, acting as honorary secretary to the Committee on Smallpox and Vaccination, which published a most elaborate and valuable report on these subjects, the outcome of which was the "Compulsory Vaccination Act of 1853."

Dr. Seaton always took much interest in the work of the Epidemiological Society, contributed several papers to it, and eventually attained to the dignity of its presidency.

After acting for some years as Medical Inspector to the General Board of Health, Dr. Seaton was, in 1865, attached to the Medical Department of the Privy Council, and on the establishment of the Local Government Board in 1871 he was appointed senior assistant medical officer under Mr. Simon, whom he succeeded in 1876 as chief of that board. From his long connection with the Government Dr. Seaton's work was necessarily of a kind that attracted comparatively little attention out of official circles, but in these it was justly and highly valued.

In 1868 he published a 'Hand-book on Vaccination.' This work contains a very full and clear exposition of the whole subject of vaccination in all its bearings, historical, practical, and preventive. It is a remarkable fact that since Bryce's work on 'Cow-pock,' published in 1809, this should have been the only treatise on the subject written in the country of its discovery.

Dr. Seaton's work as general medical officer of the Local Government Board was of a most onerous character. It proved to be beyond his strength. His health gave way under the pressure of labours that would have taxed the powers of a much younger man, and he died of paralysis on the 21st of January, in the sixty-fifth year of his age.