

Lord Lister.

Contributors

Halliburton, W. D. 1860-1931.
Royal College of Surgeons of England

Publication/Creation

[London] : [King's College], 1912.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/a6f5mu2q>

Provider

Royal College of Surgeons

License and attribution

This material has been provided by This material has been provided by The Royal College of Surgeons of England. The original may be consulted at The Royal College of Surgeons of England. where the originals may be consulted. Conditions of use: it is possible this item is protected by copyright and/or related rights. You are free to use this item in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s).



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

Halliburton

5.

THE
KING'S COLLEGE REVIEW

VOL. XIV., No. 1.

MARCH, 1912.

COLLEGE NOTES.

LORD LISTER, who died on February 10th, was Professor of Clinical Surgery in King's College from 1877 to 1892, when he was elected Emeritus Professor. He was also Surgeon to King's College Hospital from 1877 to 1893, his first House Surgeon being Sir W. W. Cheyne, who came with him from Edinburgh. Lord Lister was a Life-Governor of King's College. A very interesting appreciation of his work has been contributed, and will be found in another place.

* * * *

We also noticed the death, on January 23rd, of Lieut.-Gen. Sir Gordon Douglas Pritchard, K.C.B., Colonel Commandant, Royal Engineers, who was born in 1835, and was educated at King's College. Lieut. Pritchard, as he was at that time, was present at the first relief of Lucknow, the battle of Cawnpore, the siege and capture of Lucknow, and other engagements in the Indian Mutiny. He also served in the war in China from 1860 to 1864.

* * * *

We are very pleased to see that Prof. C. G. Barkla has been recommended by the Council of the Royal Society for election as Fellow. We offer him our heartiest congratulations.

* * * *

Professor Ramirez, who had occupied the chair of Spanish since 1891, resigned his appointment at Christmas, owing to ill-health.

* * * *

A familiar figure at the College Gatehouse fourteen years ago has just passed away. Thomas Wright, who was gate porter for twenty-two years, had previously served in the Crimea, and had gained several medals. He died at the age of 82.

LORD LISTER.

ONE of the greatest of Englishmen has been gathered to his fathers. All at King's College and King's College Hospital will unite in mourning his loss. His association with both Institutions was so close, that it is most fitting that our Magazine should contain a brief notice of his life-work. Full details of Lord Lister's life will be found in the many obituary records published in the Press, and it is quite unnecessary here to recapitulate them.

Lister's great discovery may be summed up thus: he established the principle of scientific cleanliness and by applying it to surgery, not only revolutionised that art, but brought health and life to numberless thousands of sufferers. To practise cleanliness sounds so simple, and in the present day so obvious, that it is difficult to realise the condition of things that existed not so many years ago. For centuries surgeons operated and never understood why death struck down so unmercifully those operated on. Surgical skill was in vain; erysipelas, abscess-formation, and gangrene reigned supreme. One can remember the days when every hospital had its erysipelas wards, when "surgical fever" was regarded as the normal result of every operation, when expressions such as "laudable pus" were in the mouths of every operator. Every confinement exposed the mother to death; the slightest wounds were followed by the most serious after-effects. No surgeon dared touch the peritoneum or the joints, for operations there were inevitably fatal.

Then came Pasteur, who discovered the cause of putrefaction and similar phenomena, and immediately Lister, who was then in Scotland, grasped the source of all these diseases and misery. The cause in all cases is the presence of microscopic parasites. By protecting the wounds from contamination with these, infection was prevented, for a wound in itself is innocent as long as it is free from bacteria.

It appears quite natural to-day (and it may seem to the thoughtless, ignorant of the past and powerless to imagine the past, that those notions have been current for all time) to know that instruments, water and linen heated to boiling point or treated with an antiseptic lotion contain no living germs. But the discovery is not so very old, and it was not until between 1868 and 1873 that Lister demonstrated its truth by his memorable experiments.

In 1912 this is simply common-sense; but in 1877, when Joseph Lister came to London as Professor of Clinical Surgery at King's College, and spread thence his gospel of cleanliness, the magnates of the surgical world in most cases met him and his ideas, not only with neglect but also with derision and bitter opposition. I remember hearing of one great surgeon who, seeing a microscope in the ward one day, asked what it was for. His house-surgeon, who had read some of Lister's papers, replied, he had been looking for bacteria in the matter discharged from wounds. "Oh," was the retort, "if they want a microscope to find them, I do not think they need trouble us." Such stories might be multiplied indefinitely.

But Lister with his quiet and indomitable persistence and perseverance overcame all opposition, and saw his work completed long before he died, full of years and honours, after a strenuous, but withal a serene, full and satisfying life. It is not the rare and happy lot of all great discoverers to see the fruition of their labours within their lifetime.

The great congregation within the Abbey, who on Friday, February 16th, assembled to do honour to his memory, included representatives of all countries, and of all that is best in our own land. Statesmen, University professors, surgeons, physicians and nurses, representatives of theology, literature, art, and science, all joined with the members of Lord Lister's family, and doubtless with many who had felt the touch of the healer, in paying one last tribute of respect to the departed. Those of us who had known him personally, as we listened to the words of the anthem set to the stately music of Handel, could not have chosen a better description of his lovable and enduring characteristics:

"When the ear heard him, then it blessed him; and when the eye saw him, it gave witness of him. He delivered the poor that cried; the fatherless and him that had none to help him. Kindness, meekness and comfort were in his tongue. If there was any virtue, and if there was any praise, he thought on those things. His body is buried in peace, but his name liveth evermore."

W. D. H.

LECTURES ON CHRISTIAN ART.

THE course of Lectures on Christian Art arranged for by the Faculty of Theology, and which was delivered during the Michaelmas and Lent terms of the current session, dealt with a period of the greatest interest, not only to the students of this Faculty but to a far wider circle, appealing to all those to whom the form and fabric, together with the decorations and fittings, of our ecclesiastical buildings are matters of interest and research.

It is not possible to give any detailed account of each lecture, but it will be our endeavour to give a brief *résumé* of the general scope of the course as a whole. The period dealt with was mainly that of the early days of Christian Art following the peace of the Church, though reference was made to both earlier and later work. At this period the special types of buildings that were employed for Christian worship were developed and the influences exerted by earlier buildings and the modifications introduced to adapt them for their special purpose was pointed out, and in particular the effect of intercourse with Alexandria, the importance of which as a centre of Christian Art is being increasingly recognised. So also the influence of countries lying east of the Mediterranean was emphasised both by Prof. Strzygowski and Miss Gertrude Bell, whose lecture dealt mainly with the buildings of Western Mesopotamia, which she had personally explored, and in which she traced the influence of still earlier buildings belonging to the ancient Hittite kingdom.

The early Christian basilicas and the circular or polygonal baptisteries, as erected in Rome and in Italy generally, were illustrated by Prof. Eley Smith, and the type of church constructed in the Eastern Empire, with a central domed area, square or polygonal in form, and

generally encircled by an aisle, a type which culminated in the splendid Church of St. Sophia, formed the subject of Prof. Lethaby's second lecture.

Not only were the types of building which were to be erected for a period of several hundred years to a great extent fixed at this period, but the materials and character of their decorative treatment were settled, and moreover the method of treating various accessories; traditions were established which did much to fix not merely the general types but much of the actual detail of decorative treatment both of the buildings and of minor objects.

The application of mosaic as an internal decoration formed the subject of Mr. Rushworth's lecture and he drew attention to the debt due to the earlier classical mosaics and the strong influence they exerted on the earliest known Christian mosaics, some of which differed but little in style and often also in subject from those of the late Imperial days, but it was pointed out that the representation of Biblical and religious subjects was accompanied by changes in the treatment and that an increased tendency towards conventionalism was developed.

The effect of classical tradition and example, and the change in treatment due to similar causes as they affected the art of fresco decoration with special reference to the examples of this art as found in the paintings executed in the Catacombs of Rome, were treated in Dr. Richter's lecture and the course was concluded by a most interesting account of the minor arts given by Mr. O. M. Dalton, in which again the effect of classical tradition and of the influence derived from the Southern and Eastern shores of the Mediterranean was shown to be equally important in determining the treatment of carved ivories, silk textiles, illuminated manuscripts, reliquaries and other church utensils.

The whole course was very adequately illustrated by lantern views; special reference ought to be made to the exceptionally beautiful slides used to illustrate Miss Bell's lecture and those shown by Prof. Lethaby of Santa Sofia and by Mr. Dalton in illustrating his subject.

The great assistance that recent discoveries in photography have already conferred in the proper illustration of subjects in which the colour treatment is an essential factor, were exemplified by the use of autochrome slides, which were employed to partially illustrate those lectures dealing with mosaics and frescoes.

R. E. S.

THE NIGHT WIND.

I COME, I come, from western lands,
 From the land of the dying sun;
 To sing to the trees, to croon to the flowers,
 The peace of the night to come.
 The soft clouds press close to the hills as I pass,
 Grey-mantled they sink from thy sight;
 Deep magical sleep is the spell that I cast
 'Neath the black shielding curtain of night.
 Birds; sink to rest:
 Flowers; enfold:
 Lie calm; deep meadows and vales:
 Good people of towns, I breathe you content;
 The night wind brings sleep from the dales.