Eustace Talbot : born 1 Sept. 1873. Died 26 May 1905 some recollections / [Gwendolen Stephenson, Walter Morley Fletcher, M. R. J].

Contributors

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Fletcher, Walter Morley, Sir, 1873-1933.

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EUSTACE TALBOT

1873 . 1905

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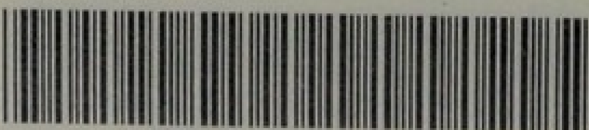
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EUSTACE TALBOT

Born 1 Sept. 1873. Died 26 May 1905.

SOME RECOLLECTIONS

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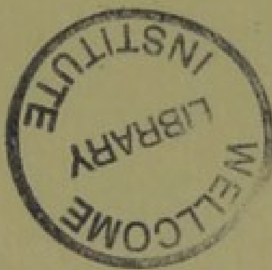
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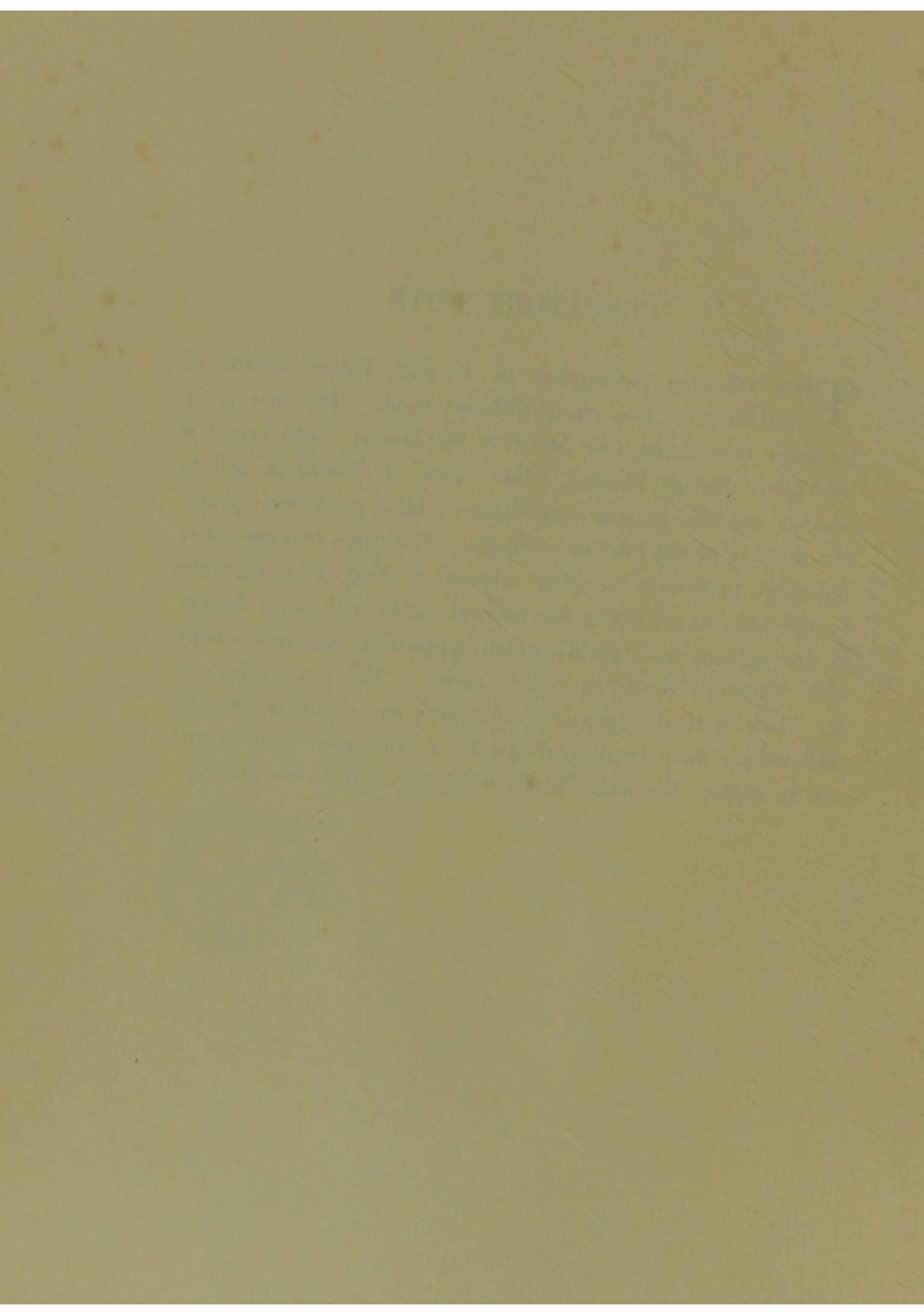
PREFATORY NOTE

THE following recollections of Eustace Talbot consist of contributions from three different hands. The first is by his sister Gwendolen, now Mrs Guy Stephenson. The second is by Walter Morley Fletcher, whose course at Cambridge and in London ran side by side with Eustace's for a good many years: the third is by the Provost of King's. The three portions make no claim to form a complete memoir of Eustace, though the second aims at recording his medical career with some fulness. A few extracts from notices which appeared in journals shortly after Eustace's death have been added. The main object of the whole is to put on record an impression of his personality. The writers have tried to do justice to the great features and not to neglect the small details which give life to the picture.

G. S.
W. M. F.
M. R. J.



I

"We'm twins," Evelyn used to say when she and Ish were hardly more than babies; and so close was the twinship that "Ish" was at first an interchangeable name, which finally survived as Evelyn's attempt at "Eustace." This was one instance of the way Evelyn always shirked intellectual responsibility. Whenever she was questioned at lessons, the answer came "Ish'll know," and once "Ish is always so glad he wasn't born a 'eathen, because then he wouldn't have known about God." They were just "the twins." "Mr Eustace was such a pudgy little boy," Toody said; and "slammocky" was a word she always applied to his clothes. I remember him first as fat and round, always untidy and always sweet-tempered. Once as he was watching a cow peacefully grazing he was heard to say "Grand life, cows, one continual feed, and nothing whatever to do," very solemnly; and after one of us had been thrown off his pony, Ish remarked, "*I* could sit on a 'orse for ages." And that was the sort of little boy I can remember setting off in a new gray overcoat and manly hat for his first term at Temple Grove; while his poor little twin consoled herself with the composition of a sentimental poem and the care of their joint possessions till the holidays. But the holidays revealed the sad fact that a new era had begun, for Ish wished to play cricket with Jack and disdained an imaginative game with hoops, for which Evelyn had been making careful preparations.

There is no more vivid memory of Ish's boyhood than "Champion" with Jack outside the house door. They each impersonated a whole XI of county players, with a stick and a soft ball and the stone wall as wicket. I can hear Ish's shout "Got it," after which it was illegal to run any more. It was always difficult to see the chubby little Ish in the man he grew to be: physically, even, he had given no promise of his great height. It is true that there remained something very youthful in the form of his face, in the colour of his skin, but it is almost startling to see from photographs, how suddenly his expression, his whole look became mature, impressive in its power. And this outer contrast was significant of the inner contrast between Ish as boy and man. I think no one could have prophesied his development. His sweet temper was there, of course, and his tender-heartedness. It was the same Ish who broke down over reading the record of Toody's life, that I remember hiding himself in floods of tears when, as a little boy, he heard that she was to be housekeeper and leave off being nurse. And I never saw him angry in my life, to the extent, I mean, of losing his self-control. He had, by nature, a wonderfully perfect temper, he alone among us all. That made it impossible for any one to be adequately angry with him. After the most outrageous behaviour on his part, after he had left important letters unanswered or unposted, or let someone else pay for a Play ticket unthanked, or taken clothes belonging to Father or the others without apology, his undisturbed smile and inability to understand what there was to fuss about, always disarmed righteous anger.

I always remember our arrival—Mother's and mine—for the May Week at Cambridge. Everyone else was welcomed at the station by assiduous sons and brothers. There was, of course, no Ish. We had to heave our own luggage along the platform and struggle, panting, for a fly. Arrived at Ish's rooms there was

still no sign of him and instead of the tea we longed for, we were greeted by a tray of bones! But he was never brought to a sense of his enormity then, nor on the many occasions on which we suffered from his optimistic apathy, when we wished to get home from a Play. I can see Ish in a disgraceful old hat, elbowing his way slowly back to us through the crowd, smiling at the memory of some witticism that he had been exchanging with a friend on the way, to make the cheering announcement, "I think *I* shall walk." Nor would he ever repent of his frequent social iniquities. Seated next someone who bored him at dinner, at a very early stage he would abandon all effort and squaring round to his more congenial neighbour, give himself up to the full enjoyment of intercourse. When we attacked him afterwards he would say complacently, "A case of plucky play on a sticky wicket," and then after a hug "And I was so very lovable to—."

He had that sense of proportion and width of outlook which make a man great; and this casualness and negligence in some of the details of life were the defects of this quality. He was never hampered or worried by little difficulties and offences in his intercourse with others. This intercourse was the great enjoyment of his life; he enjoyed it whole-heartedly. And this was an achievement in one so sensitive and so quick to see. He never made any effort to be liked, to suit himself to other people; no atmosphere gave him a sense of strain: he did not know what *gêne* or shyness meant. Smartness never oppressed him, it never even made him feel aware of the shabbiness of his clothes! One of those who knew him best said, "He was the most unworldly man I ever knew." And that without any effort; it was no temptation to him to rate people the higher for what they had. He enjoyed the luxury he occasionally shared, but always humourously, always independently. I remember his amazement when I told him it was an effort to me to travel 3rd when everyone else was going 1st.

1—2

"I go 3rd because there isn't a 4th" was his formula. And no want of external refinements marred his appreciation of someone he liked. Many disputes have we had with him on this point. He saw, of course; but he simply could not understand allowing such things to deprive one of the power to appreciate a man or woman worth anything. He did not try to shut his eyes to the facts, but they mattered nothing at all to him. Any insistence on them roused his contempt. Without effort, he got all the enjoyment and interest possible out of every type of person. We used to be impatient with him when he expatiated on the charm of some hopeless little girl, kissing his hand to her in the air in a vulgar way he had. "She is an appalling little flirt," we would say. "Good luck to her," was always Ish's answer. He could not understand demanding the same from everyone, it seemed to him so unintelligent. He would settle himself down with complete content to a long discussion on the minutiae of some game, but would equally enjoy the exhilaration of intellectual discussion. He did not look out for cleverness in everyone, least of all in women. "It is," he would say, "the least desirable of all desirable things in woman." But there was a limit to his endurance of stupidity; and when that was reached he gave himself no further trouble, and relapsed deliberately into conversation in words of one syllable. He thought it simply stupid to disparage talk about people: "it would be to deny oneself the pleasure of human shop," he said. That was the sort of phrase he enjoyed repeating. We were surprised that he could so thoroughly enjoy the society at Davos and devote himself so easily to the little pursuits there. I think it was his fundamental independence of it all which made him able to take it as it came, and to enrich his life by that experience as well as by all others. "After all," he wrote home, "there are only two classes of human beings: men and women—and they are always interesting and get-on-able with." And the

men and women in whom he was "always interested" enjoyed themselves in his company, because he asked no more of them than they could give, and appreciated their individualities, their failings, their limitations, and each in turn thought he knew Ish very well, for the most part quite unaware of the many-sidedness, which he yet took no trouble to conceal. Jack says of him that "he was serenely confident of his power of getting on with people and treated it as quite a natural thing that they should like him and enjoy his company and yet he was utterly lacking in arrogance or conceit." And *à propos* of this I remember a heated discussion at Falconhurst on the difference which complete knowledge would make in our estimate of each other. "If I was known thoroughly," said someone, "I should be kicked out of any house." And we echoed this. "No," said Ish with conviction, "I am certain that if people knew me through and through, they would like me all right." He was certainly, as Bert says "a bit of a Bohemian" with a "taste for all sorts and conditions of life"; variety did not weary, but exhilarated him. He liked all sorts of books. He read because he enjoyed it primarily, and not on any particular system. He was intensely modern in his taste: an ardent admirer of Browning and Stevenson and Barrie and above all Meredith, but he delighted too in older books: Boswell and Dickens; and there were no set limits to his powers of literary appreciation. Words and phrases gave him real pleasure, he expressed himself thereby in all sincerity. One of the great sources of his enjoyment was Playgoing. And here his tolerance was boundless; he was very rarely bored. Still more rarely shocked, and he thoroughly enjoyed the most naïve humour and was in a chronic state of admiration for the beauty of some actress.

His cricket was characteristic of him. He took no trouble to conform to any rules, his style was often execrable, yet his play was effective, and his big hits a pleasure to see. No one praised them

so vehemently as he, or used a richer vocabulary in describing the vicissitudes of his innings. Looking back down the long vista of happy cricket-weeks, he stands out as the central figure, denominating all with his great height, his humourous ease, his entire enjoyment, and that sense of power which even in the happy little things of life raised him above all the rest. This pre-eminence came to him naturally, he made no effort to achieve it. Many men, in describing an incident or telling a story, contrive to convey the impression that they were the prominent figures in the scene. Ish never did; it was quite impossible to him to pose. He would never make capital out of his profession, never told dramatic stories from the hospitals; when people tried to draw him in this way, he always turned from the subject.

As he himself took a large view of others, demanding of them only that which they could give, so he asked that he too should be taken on trust, that he should not be expected to show in little ways how much he cared, how strong was his feeling for home. "I have always been bad at domestic relations," he said to Mother, when he was dying. And, in a sense, this was true. It never came naturally to him to say at home what he had been doing, he was often impenetrably silent. We called him the "Tomb" or "Tombeau" because we often had to do all the talking, while he responded with a monosyllable which might quite equally be "yes" or "no." We usually had to learn from others any event in his career, and many were the fruitless post-cards with which Father would try to extract information from him as to his plans. He was erratic in the matter of present-giving; he usually forgot birthdays, or remembered them on the wrong days; at Christmas he made one great effort of which he was inordinately proud, and neglected the rest completely or gave them books which he himself wanted to read. For *the* present every year, he was never tired of claiming appreciation, and he regarded his own ingenuity in

devising it, with the utmost complacency. I can see him putting his arm round May; "Do you want to see a really beautiful present?" He very often stood aloof from events in home-life; this was partly because he was slack about coming, but partly too, because he suffered from what we know as "heat." Things were very liable to make him "hot"; he has been known to leave a school-treat in haste because he could not bear the prospect of a dialogue between two of the children, and he never could bring himself to endure speech-making or functions of any kind in his home. He gave two lectures at the school with the utmost ease, and was quite indifferent to the effect they produced, but that was not the sort of thing that made him "hot!" Very few people knew how nervous he was, because he was so quiet and unfussed, and seemed always master of the situation. But he suffered from all kinds of nervous distresses; sudden fear of giddiness, dislike of being in a place whence it was difficult to get out, strong disinclination to face a crisis. "I am a terrible shirker," he said to me in the last talk we had; and he wrote from Davos "I find myself drawing back with the strange and unreasoning reluctance one always has for facing the unknown and beginning a new patch of life. No memory of past success and no amount of self-confidence will ever wean me from the 'new boy at school' feeling I have at fresh starts. I really believe if the choice were given me, I should always choose the groove in which I am at the moment rather than embark in a new venture however ardently I really desire the change."

I used sometimes to wonder why it was so delightful to have him in the house, why one always wanted to tell him everything. He was not by any means always responsive, he very often answered a tirade from one of his sisters by a long hug regardless of appearances, and he never shewed the faintest interest if he did not feel it. But the response, when it came, was stimulating; he always

understood—indeed one found that he had understood all the time while others were arguing their way to a conclusion. I often remember coming to him with what I thought a new discovery about one of the others and finding that he had known all along, but had not seen the use of talking about it. He was never in a hurry to give his opinion. Some have described his as "a genial presence"; but to us the word is undescriptive. He would come into the room after his day's work and throw himself full length into a chair and not speak at all unless he was absolutely forced to. Or he would invite one of us to come and sit with him while he ate his dinner before the evening train on Sundays and then be impenetrably silent. Yet somehow, as Peg said "one always had the hump when he went out of the room."

Long ago we used to be irritated by the weight attached to Ish's opinions; we called them his "striking words" and resented the fact that when he did give himself the trouble of expression, he was listened to with such respect. But it was quite right; Ish never talked as he himself would have said "through his hat," except deliberately. His colleagues say that his great gift was intuition in diagnosis; and he had the same intuition in daily life, and was quite aware that he knew. Now and again his letters reveal the love of home which was usually left unexpressed. In one he wrote, "It has been our great privilege and heavy responsibility to have lived constantly in the presence of all that is lovely and of good report."

And after a summer holiday:

"I don't think I ever remember so delightful a time at Falconhurst, and I can't say more for any holiday than that."

And from Davos, where he was spending Christmas: "This will be the first time for twenty-six years that I have not woken up on Christmas morning under the familiar Falconhurst roof. What a mass of associations and memories those twenty-six Christmas Days

have accumulated! I suppose we can never appreciate the force that gradually collects around us by the simple ordinary factors of our daily life, so little noticed at the time, so potent in their effects on our whole beings. And Christmas time is full of memories of the strongest Falconhurst flavour."

And again from Davos.

"Oh! I wish I could walk in after a muddy walk to an open fire-place and drawn curtains and a large noisy party all talking at once, and the indescribable home feeling over all!"

And lastly he wrote after his thirtieth birthday in words to which his death has given strange solemnity:

"Thirty is undoubtedly a landmark of considerable importance, and I only pray that I may have grace and strength to live whatever life may be given me in such manner as not to tarnish the record of my home and name. I feel that is a sufficiently high aim to tax my utmost efforts. I am convinced that we of the present generation can never be too thankful for the unyielding standard that must always be associated to us with the name of home."

He saw with startling clearness the peculiarities and limitations and weaknesses of us all, but that left undisturbed the tenderness he had for us because we belonged to him. He was always ready to put his medical knowledge at the disposal of any one of us, and in Toody's last illness he devoted himself to her service. I can see him going into her room in the early morning after we had come back from a ball to soothe her with his smile and the encouragement of his voice; and it was on her "darling gentleman" that she relied, and for whose coming she longed through the distress of her last days on earth.

Perhaps it was the great tenderness he had which made the idea of marriage wonderful to him. He had too the utmost reverence for women, untouched by the squalid and vicious side of life with which he came into close contact, and a special love for little

children. He delighted in holding the tiniest baby on his knee, pinching its cheeks with his long fingers, and his little nephews and nieces were a great joy to him. The thought of marriage was never long absent from his mind. "Marriage," he would say, "is essential for the majority of men and the totality of women." And he invested the whole idea with infinite poetry and romance, even awe. It was this awe, the overwhelming sense of his own unworthiness which made him hesitate to enter his kingdom; and death came to him just in the dawn of that for which no man ever more ardently desired.

It is difficult to speak of Ish's religion; he rarely spoke of it himself. It came more easily to him to quote Stevenson than the Bible, and he was always impatient of the little observances which he classed as "mediaevalisms." Still he shared with the rest of us a keen intellectual interest in matters of faith and Church Government. He read a certain amount of very profound theology, attracted most, I think, by the Cambridge type, by Bishop Westcott or the Dean of Westminster. He seems to describe his own position in a letter written after reading Huxley's Life. "It is so very much easier for the stalwart denier to appear honest than the man who is defending with all his might what he with all his soul believes to be true, yet knows that he has got hold—and that mistily—of a very small part of a vast whole."

He disliked condemning other people's views, they always interested him; he easily believed that they too might have "got hold of a very small part of a vast whole"; he was irritated by the stupidity of intolerance. It was all the more impressive when the limits of his tolerance were reached. I can hear him saying of "De Profundis:" "It is blasphemy—it reveals the Hell of the artistic temperament."

He went his own way in the matter of church going and was bored by all the conventional helps to devotion, but he hardly ever

missed his weekly Communion and some have written of the devoutness of his behaviour there. And because we knew that "with all his soul he believed," we were not surprised that in the act of dying he threw himself back upon the Christian truths of sin and forgiveness: and because the Lord was his Shepherd even in the Valley of the Shadow of Death feared no evil and received his last Communion with gladness.

II

I think Eustace after his schooldays never discussed any but the details of his future work. Certainly at Cambridge it always appeared that he thought it inevitable, and very desirable, that he should become a physician. He never wavered as to this or put himself to the trouble of debating it. I used to gather that it was early in his time at Winchester that he came to this view, and I suppose it was his decision for medicine that took him to Cambridge instead of to Oxford. Between Winchester and Cambridge came the year in which he read some natural science at Leeds,—a time of which we used to hear very little,—and in that year he had also a long holiday at Dresden, where he founded a strong affection for the music of Wagner. His love of this and of other music lay often dormant for want of stimulus or any deliberate exercise, but it was always a possession of his. As I think of it now, it was characteristic of him that what amounted to a considerable knowledge of music should have been held so generally in reserve. It was never paraded, though it found the easiest expression on the proper occasions in sympathy with others. I remember that during seven years I never discovered that he had heard the "Ring," yet when I came back from Bayreuth in 1899 he revived his memory, as it seemed for my sake, and I found it was with him I had most to say and hear,—indeed for weeks afterwards it was not always easy to keep him from unashamed

efforts to reproduce appropriate operatic effects by voice and gesture, during which he would bestow a sort of caressing inaccuracy upon the German words.

In October 1892 he began the medical course at Cambridge. Yet, to express the beginning of his manifold life there in those terms seems oddly inaccurate. He did then begin the long routine of laboratory work and periodic examinations which fills the three or four years before clinical study in hospital, and he did this step by step with most of his contemporaries and with reasonable credit throughout, taking in his third year also the ordinary degree in Natural Sciences. But this side of his life was almost entirely subordinate to the larger life he was leading among his friends, when he was gaining what he afterwards called the "precious possession" of his four years at Cambridge. His spacious and leisurely life of friendships and games and books seemed then, and seems now, altogether incompatible with a full attention to the tedious details of laboratory work, which generally shew little enough of their value in the first years, even to an absorbed student. To many of his contemporaries, I daresay, Eustace may have appeared to be not so much a medical student as an idler, and I am sure his ordinary acquaintances in Jesus Lane and the "Pitt" heard with amazement, if they ever heard it, that "Teeny Talbot" passed medical examinations. But I think it was a sound instinct by which he kept his professional work, during these years, in the background, and remained content with not much more than the minimum of preliminary technical training. Certainly one thing that helped him to this was his confident belief that he was to be a physician or nothing. He was able to distinguish the means from the end, and he was never bothered as some medical students are, by mistaking the technical drudgery of anatomy and physiology for their life work and finding it uncongenial. Eustace put these preliminaries in their right place as a necessary evil; he knew he

must get to know them effectively, and did, but I think he never took any joy in his work until he came nearer to the real business. After all, it is a physician above all others, whose education should fit him to perform his offices not only "justly and skilfully," but also "magnanimously"; and Milton's splendid additional adverb seems to me exactly to express the ways that Eustace got from his large life and his wide view. And one other thing may be said here, —I fancy that he came near to realising the grimness of the hospital days that were coming and was willing to fill himself beforehand, as it were, with sun and light. He certainly never lost the glow of his Cambridge happiness even in such months as he had, for instance, at the City Road hospital afterwards, and, whether half designedly or not, his Cambridge preparation turned out to be a very fitting one.

It was not then his science work that made his real life at Cambridge, and of his other life it is not here that much should be said. From the first there were immense undergraduate claims upon his time. Trinity, King's, Jesus Lane, were full of his friends and he was soon upon the committee at both the "Pitt" and the A.D.C. A rough indication of the catholicity of his acquaintanceship might be found in the existence of separate names for him in different sets. A large body of friends, chiefly cricketers, called him "Teeny," and in their company he played a good deal of college cricket and played often in casual matches, commonly away from Cambridge, for the "Nihilists," a now obsolete Pitt cricket club, which boasted of its want of blazer or any colours. His intimate friends called him Eustace,—I need not speak of the sides he shewed them,—while to the men he met in the ordinary walks of life, and in the laboratory, he was Talbot,—a striking personality, in manner casual or sometimes actually overbearing, and on the whole something of a magnificent mystery. The real smug in the lecture room, the Athenaeum man who met Eustace at dinner, or

the narrow cricketer who talked to him in a pavilion, all had this in common, that while intercourse with Eustace was generally easy, and often delightful, on their own lines, it left an uncomfortable feeling that something in him was only half tolerant of them.

He played Tennis two or three times a week and, like all found worthy of the privilege, was a warm friend of Jim Harradine the professional. Eustace gave noble support to the tradition that Jim's radical politics are to be freely blackguarded, and he conducted much of his conversation with him in terms of truculent abuse. In 1895 Eustace played in the Tennis Doubles for Cambridge with Philip Cobbold at Lord's. I think of him in the Tennis Court most vividly as he appeared when using his high service, just as he made a lithe movement from the waist to get his undercut, his shoulders carried stiff and high. (It was a long standing piece of wit to feel his shoulder under his coat and complain that the "padding" was not up to the usual mark. This always led to bitter words of resentment.) When he got in a good service he would say very incisively, putting his head on one side and smacking his lips, "I like it well!" After a hard game on a winter's afternoon when he had returned to his glowing red rooms in Bridge Street, had had tea brought him by the invaluable Miller, brisk, silent and red-haired,—and had lighted a pipe of the invariable Fribourg and Treyer's bird's-eye tobacco, he would indulge aloud in the reflection that he felt "like a Greek god." He read a great deal in his rooms,—in general after such an introduction of exercise, tea and tobacco; but text-books were often long postponed in favour of Boswell, Pepys, Stevenson, Meredith, or Barrie. Work in his room was still further handicapped in his last year by his editorship of the *Granta*. Some of his numbers were supposed to be rather scurrilous—one was certainly very scurrilous; but he was said to have made more out of it pecuniarily than any other editor. Eustace had great facility

in writing and took a very pleasant and affectionate pride in it. He wrote very fast and I think rarely corrected afterwards.

He was absolutely free from the boyish narrowness which keeps most undergraduates from seeing much of Dons, and his older friends played a very large part in his life. Monty James' rooms in King's were a regular haunt of his, of course, then and later. He got to know Arthur Shipley of Christ's in his first term at the Biology class and always accepted invitations to dine in Shipley's beautiful rooms with great alacrity. Invariably also he misjudged the time needed for getting there from Bridge Street. I first met him, and Tom Balfour who kept with Eustace at Miller's, at dinner with Shipley in their first week or two, and I remember an extreme talkativeness, not least on the part of Eustace, generously tolerated by Francis Darwin and the host.

Then Eustace was constantly at Scroope House, completely at ease in friendship with J., while Mrs J. had the place of some beloved relation. He was always in great form when he dined there, as he delighted to do. From first to last there was something very loveable in the way in which Eustace received his fleshly pleasures. He took delight in the good things of the table and yet shewed no approach to ordinary greed or selfishness. I think there is no table in the land at which Eustace would not be capable of squaring himself before a plate of soup, finishing it with gusto, and of remarking in a loud aside, "And that's a very good soup." The formula might be changed for "But what a soup!" I can see him setting down an emptied glass of J.'s claret and saying in unaffected appreciation, "And what's the matter with it?" giving at the same time an odd smiling twitch of his lip. This table radiance of his was a very pleasant thing, and yet it is not easy to explain why it was different from greed. It was different, and Eustace could accept, and later habitually accepted, conditions of poor living with complete equanimity. But he was

able in some way to translate material pleasantness into parallel phases of mental exaltation, which gave his happiness the easiest and most delightful expression, and made him extraordinary 'good company.'

His Leeds work had made the first undergraduate year of preliminary science an easy one. His two remaining years before his degree were chiefly occupied with anatomy and physiology, of which, though I think in these years he did least work, he read enough, with some extra science, to get his degree. It was in his fourth year as a Bachelor that he brought these two subjects up to a professional standard, and in June 1896 he passed what is called the Second M.B. examination. In spite of his editorship of the *Granta* during this year, and an unbroken loyalty to companionship, Eustace read very steadily for this end. The Physiology was of the two subjects the more congenial to him, and he used to enjoy the fine literary flavour of Sir Michael Foster's text-book, phrases of which he would often be quoting with fervent relish. In that really great book, now unhappily little read, the exposition flows on in well-balanced, often high-sounding periods, enshrining remarkable judicial reviews of the existing state of knowledge. Eustace liked in it the complete absence of dogma, and rightly appreciated the whole as a fine piece of literature. At most incongruous times he might come out with part of an enpurpled summary to a chapter,—"the accomplishment of each beat of the heart is, so to speak, a hurdle which has to be leapt, one of the long series of hurdles which make up the steeplechase of life:" or—"but the whole story of proteid metabolism consists at present mostly of guesses and of gaps." He would imitate Michael Foster's lecture manner too, in the proper deprecatory non-committal manner, with the rhythmic jerk forward of the hand, and perhaps the characteristic but apocryphal introduction to a sentence "And,—or, as I should rather say,—but—."

Even at this time I think the ordinary run of men looked upon Eustace as a very casual worker, and none of them I should say had the smallest idea that he would turn out to be one of the strongest men of his years. His anatomy was of course far less congenial to him than the other side, and in this he coached with Barclay-Smith. It was obvious, certainly to him, that the details of it would never have a persistent importance as they would have for a surgeon. It is significant that he bought Osler's large text-book of medicine in that year, a work with which he ought then to have had no concern, and browsed among its chapters at his leisure.

With June came the examination, and the probable close too of his university life. He looked forward to hospital work in London with real pleasure, but he confessed often in the last weeks that he could hope to be ploughed. "I don't know any anatomy, and another term here would be uncommonly good." But he did pass, and that was the end of his real Cambridge time, though he was never afterwards many weeks at a time away. I remember very vividly a great outburst of sentiment which came from him on one of his last evenings in that June, as we looked across the King's lawn towards Clare and the high trees beyond the river, when what is almost the most lovely sight in Cambridge was at its loveliest. What he thought then may be given in his own words, from his last number of the *Granta*,

> "The fact remains that we are saying good-bye to Cambridge, and that, however often we may visit it in the future, the peculiar charm of the relation we have borne to it for the last three or four years can never come back to us again. Looking back, memories come to us of many delightful hours spent in the company of those we have learnt to love and respect; of many friendships formed, which we trust will continue through life; of many experiences undergone since the

day when we entered Cambridge as a freshman, and stood bewildered on the threshold, not knowing what to expect or what to dread"...."For the memories are very pleasant, we have had a wonderfully 'good time,' such a 'good time' that we can hardly demand from fate a better one in the unknown future"...."Others will fill our places, and very shortly all memory of ourselves will be gone. Still we have, as a precious possession, the memory of four delightful years, and we can depart deeply thankful that we have been allowed to taste so many of the pleasures, and to share so many of the joys, of Cambridge."

Eustace entered at St Bartholomew's Hospital in the following October (1896). This choice of a hospital was made very early, and I think he hardly did more than go through the form of discussing it at Cambridge. It seemed to be just as much a settled thing that he should go to Bart's as that he should be a physician. From the beginning he had every kind of affection, in sentiment and judgment, for the place, for the slums round it, for its buildings,—even for the squalid and now superseded college buildings, over which I think Sir James Paget's life cast for him a kind of glamour. Most of all, his affection was for what is the real "hearth" of St Bartholomew's,—the Square in the midst of the grey buildings, with its trees and the central fountain and basin, over which in spite of the London dinginess a gay and foreign air seems often to be cast by the pigeons flying and drinking, and the colour given by the patients who may be there in their scarlet woollen dressing gowns. Eustace used to say that for a Trinity man to go anywhere but to "Bart's" was to find *bathos*.

Here his life, outwardly, was completely changed. If he put professional work second to other things at Cambridge,—and some

justification has been shewn for this,—it was otherwise in London. From the beginning of his hospital work he put aside every other competing interest, and he omitted no routine or postponed any effort in pressing on towards medical qualification.

In his first winter session he was a surgical 'dresser.' It was necessary for him to be ready for work in the "Surgery"—the out-patients receiving hall,—every day of the week at nine in the morning, and to assist there in meeting the needs of a heterogeneous crowd of suffering and generally uncleanly humanity, throughout the morning, and often until afternoon. In the old "Surgery,"—now happily replaced by a commodious and well-organised out-patient department,—the conditions of work were such as to give almost the maximum of fatigue to the dressers. A "busy morning" in the Surgery in those days meant for the dresser a protracted physical struggle, in a close and often foul atmosphere. Every act of surgical attention given to each patient as each was extricated from the waiting and seated crowd, needed for its success a watchful selection of opportunity in the midst of perpetual racket and bustle. Bandages and instruments had to be sought with desperate intentness in the flying scene. A useful implement laid aside for a moment might be snatched away by another dresser and gone beyond recall in an instant. Babies were to be soothed, frightened boys encouraged, a muscular and perhaps tipsy butcher might claim as much physical control as surgical skill, a dreary and selfish old person might strain by his unnecessary rapacity for attention all the remaining patience of the dresser. The whole scene, with its mixed elements of pathos and of humour, made incessant demands upon a man's bodily, mental and moral endurance.

The morning in the Surgery was followed on almost every afternoon by attendance on the surgeon in the wards, or by seeing important operations performed. In some periods special surgical

classes were to be attended later still, when the afternoon work was over. It was supposed, moreover, that the surgical dresser, after his day's work at the hospital, was to give his evening to the study of text-books for his future examinations.

Into all this work, with the exception no doubt of the evening text-book, Eustace threw himself with unfeigned content. I am inclined to think that he never enjoyed himself in the hospital so much as he did in the Surgery, whether it was in his earliest days there as an inexperienced dresser, or later as junior house-physician, or, later again, when he was casualty physician and stalked among the crowd as a superior officer, in long white cloak, pencil to lip, selecting and distributing cases for treatment. The crowd stimulated him (a crowd always did,—he used to say he could never act to a "cold house" at the A.D.C., or play tennis so well as with a full *dedans* behind him); he delighted in the types he found in it and was very quick to understand them. His ready and effective humour helped him not only with the patients, but in the competitions—in the early days—with other dressers, for opportunity or materials. None who knew him need be told of the entire satisfaction his appreciation of persons or situations would be likely to give himself or those with him; to those who do not know, nothing that is written could give the right impression. For myself, I can hardly think of any occasions on which I gained more enjoyment of Eustace than on such as those in the Surgery. It was no question of being amused by a wag; a wag says funny things which can be repeated, and there is an end of it. In Eustace humour sprang from a sort of largeness of observation, a very strong and virile sympathy; it overflowed from him—and he had exceptional powers of expression—to all about him. In that very sordid place his physical appearance of itself made him an unconscious standard of sanity and of the worth of living.

Early in the next summer he had the experience of a month's work as midwifery assistant in the poor districts about the hospital. The midwifery clerks at that time lived for their month of duty in a lodging-house known as "Mackenzie's," in Smithfield, overlooking the meat market. They were liable to be called at any hour of the day or night for work in the worst slums around them. This was a time to which Eustace looked back always with great interest and pleasure. I remember his coming to Cambridge for a week's holiday just after that month, having made the necessary holocaust of all the clothing he had worn there, and how full he was of the sayings and doings of the Italian organ-grinders of Hatton Garden, of the butchers and helpers of Smithfield, of the assistance he had had through one terrific night from a wholly drunken Irish woman. His reminiscences were not only of comedy; like all who have had a similar experience he had been very deeply impressed by the tragedies of slum life and by the great glory of maternity shining even in the darkest places, impressions associated always with the memory of long watchings at night and the weariness of the returning home as the day dawned over the empty London asphalte.

He was never at all inclined to surgery I think for its own sake, and never relaxed his greater interest in medicine. He pressed on however with the necessary surgery and midwifery, and passed his examinations in both at Cambridge as soon as he could. He was not very dexterous manually, and not so fond of manipulations as to be attracted to surgery on that account. In speaking of his hands though, it is difficult not to recall how interested he was himself in their movements. He rarely took up a stethoscope, or set down a wine-glass, or moved out a card at bridge, without some little half-conscious exaggeration of finger-play. If talk ever fell on the subject, or could be steered towards it, he was very

prone to remark, as he made the appropriate display, "now *there's* a hand for you."

From the beginning his interests were almost wholly on the medical side. He was clinical clerk first to Dr (now Sir William) Church, whom he always regarded with the greatest affection and respect. Apart from the many obvious qualities which to anyone who knew them both would fully account for the personal attraction Eustace felt—an attraction we may well suppose to have been reciprocated—the then senior physician of St Bartholomew's shewed exactly that kind of clinical intuition, an insight based on many and subtle observations, which Eustace was always ambitious to possess and which he shewed later was to be his also. This clinical instinct belongs to the true physician: it is the part of the physician's art not yet reclaimed as part of the physician's science: it is not to be learnt from text-books, though some part of it may be caught by example and imitation. I am sure that the road by which Eustace made his own strength as a physician was influenced for him more by Sir William Church than by any other of the first rate physicians he worked under or worked with at St Bartholomew's or elsewhere. Church was certainly his "father in medicine." Eustace was for at least two separate periods one of his clinical clerks, and later, to his own great satisfaction, became his house physician.

The Bacteriology and Pathology for his final examination he did not begin in the hospital laboratories, but after two years of nearly constant work in London he came to Cambridge for the Long Vacation of 1898 to attend Professor Kanthack's courses there. This was an interlude of very useful work under ideal conditions: he had lectures and agreeable laboratory classes morning and afternoon, with his early evenings free for exercise. In view of a daily lecture at 2 p.m. before the afternoon's work, Eustace used to have black coffee with me nearly every day after

luncheon, and for that half-hour we always played "Jacobi," with Geoffrey Slade, of Trinity[1], as a third. Eustace was full just then of "the Wrong Box." "It will brace him a bit," he would say as he inflicted an expensive knave; "can we do nothing for the man in the cart?" as he added up the score. During those weeks he was altogether in the highest spirits. He was in Cambridge again, he had rooms in the Great Court, he liked the new kind of work and he was personally attached to Kanthack. Monty James was in residence and available on many evenings for a bicycle ride and supper. I speak of this summer for two reasons; first because I think it was one of the happiest times of his student life—it has for me at least enriched Cambridge with a multitude of precious memories—second, because of the impression Eustace was making then upon Kanthack, who had not met him before. Kanthack shewed, of course, the greatest delight in Eustace's personality, but, more than this, he gave special notice and help to his work. He told me, I remember, of his conviction that Eustace would certainly be among the best of his contemporaries. This was a deliberate judgment, though based only on impression: Eustace was then one of a class of thirty or forty men, many of whom had been far above him in examination distinctions. Kanthack, I think, hardly guessed at that time what position Eustace was actually to reach: nor was he ever to see it, for he died with tragic suddenness himself before three months had passed.

After some further medical work in London in that autumn and winter, Eustace became qualified, first by diploma of the London Colleges, and then by taking his M.B. and B.C. degrees at

[1] Slade who later reached a position at the London Hospital corresponding with that of Eustace at St Bartholomew's, died early in 1905 after an illness of two days, shortly after his engagement to be married.

Cambridge. Medical qualification of all the goals of human attainment is one of the least satisfying to those who reach it. It provides the medical student with nothing except relief from examination, and brings him only the conviction that it is not the end of medical study—as for several years he has fondly believed—but indeed only the necessary condition for it. Qualification implies much second-hand and only a little first-hand knowledge. Its immediate value for a serious man lies chiefly in its making him eligible for a great variety of appointments in hospitals, by holding which he may learn the real practice of his art. Eustace now naturally turned at once to the hope of obtaining a house-physicianship under Church. This came to him, as a matter of fact, at the next possible opportunity—and this may be taken as the first outward mark of the position he was already taking among his contemporaries. Though secure of his appointment, it was not until the next October (1899), at the beginning of the hospital year, that his duties were to begin. The intervening summer months he occupied by work at the City Road Hospital for Diseases of the Chest—a place destined to be very important to him afterwards. Here he now became house physician from April to June, and for the three following months resident medical officer.

There can be little doubt that his work of that exhausting summer, in that place, to be followed immediately by his winter's duties at St Bartholomew's, led to his illness of the next spring. Nevertheless he owed a great deal professionally to the experience he gained in the City Road. To the daily and abundant drill he had there in physical diagnosis of diseases of the heart and lungs, he owed much of the facility he shewed afterwards. We often went to see him there when he was resident during July, August and September. His room—comfortable enough, but a little discouraging in the air of official stiffness given it by its sanitary painted walls and its disproportionately high ceiling—

looked out on the gaunt thoroughfare, whose brightest features were, by day, a large advertisement hoarding exactly opposite, and by night, the clanking and the moving lights of the passing trams.

Life by night and day in the constant presence of dangerous disease or hopeless suffering may be made tolerable, and indeed is made tolerable, for the whole army of young doctors who live together as responsible and underpaid lieutenants in the London hospitals, by their human kindliness and by their professional interest. But Eustace was quite alone here: he had no resident colleagues, and on the stuffy nights of that summer his courage must often have been very highly tried. His days passed busily enough in the routine examinations of patients and in his attendance on the visits of the senior staff physician. He obviously enjoyed his work, and it was by no means on the grim side of his existence that he was apt to dwell.

He used to have his midday dinner with an important lay official of the Hospital, and where another man might have found his unchosen company irksome, Eustace quickly discovered that he was enjoying all the delights of conversation with a second type of Michael Finsbury. He had always some engaging directness of speech to retail to us, and I recollect that it was once specially arranged that I should bring Carr Bosanquet to lunch with him, that we might appreciate his daily advantages. The result was a disappointment because when the time arrived Carr Bosanquet, probably from a sense of duty, infused us all with a portentous solemnity.

In his evenings he was on duty, though at leisure unless an emergency arose, and these I sometimes spent with him. On one of these evenings we were playing piquet; Eustace had many delightful habits in this game—in particular a constant flow of vivid metaphor and illustration in abuse of his cards, illustrating from time to time his principle, in ill-fortune, of "cutting deep for luck," or excusing

an occasional attempted evasion of the deal so as to gain an extra elder hand, as "an old one—but worth trying." A summons came hurriedly from the night-nurse. "So and so was very bad in such and such a ward." The poor man seen sitting up in bed in the dimly lighted ward was indeed *in extremis*, searching vainly for breath on that stifling night, after a sudden seizure. The occasion soon demanded, I remember, a further supply of a particular drug: a precipitate search in the deserted dispensary, closed for the night, ended in Eustace finding it necessary to make the final preparation of the drug himself. As we afterwards hurried upstairs, I heard him giving grudging blessings to the old-fashioned pharmaceutical chemistry (now reformed) from which all his generation had suffered so much at Cambridge. On the next day I heard that the issue had turned in favour of the patient, who gained a comfortable reprieve—but not without half a night of critical and anxious manœuvring by Eustace.

Those who knew him will not need to be told to what degree he had the confidence and affection of everyone he worked for, or worked with, at the City Road: the fact was patent enough to anyone who saw or heard of him there. As for the value of his professional skill at that time, the opinion of it which his seniors there held may be judged best from the facts that it was only four years later that he was elected a member of the permanent visiting staff, and that in 1905 he was appointed pathologist to the hospital.

His duties at the City Road ended on September 30th (1899): on October 1st he became house physician at St Bartholomew's and began at once, though with far too small a margin of health, the work he had looked forward to so eagerly. To exchange his exile at the City Road for daily life about the "Square" again at

St Bartholomew's, he thought of almost as a holiday. He had to look forward to six months work as "junior house physician," in which he would be non-resident, working among out-patients, and keeping in touch, to only a voluntary degree, with the wards in which he would later be responsible. This half year was to be followed by six months as "senior house physician," an officer resident in the College, responsible under his visiting physician of the staff for certain wards, and responsible also, informally, but by long-standing custom, for the work of the student clinical clerks attached to them, and in a position to give them very important help in their instruction.

During this October and November I lived with Eustace in Great George Street, sleeping four nights a week there and three at Cambridge. Every morning at 9 he was on duty in the old "Surgery," seeing out-patient cases—fresh ones, or others under treatment, in a room of his own at the side, opening out of the main hall. It was now that his experience at the City Road began to tell, and it was very soon that his work was recognised as being above the ordinary level reached by the beginning house physician. It was a great pleasure to him to be holding his first official position at Bart's, and he was well contented with life during these autumn months. But in health he was not really fit, and twice at least he had sharp attacks of bad "cold," and bad throat; he fought these away with a little humourous self-doctoring, and unluckily neither he nor the rest of us saw anything sinister in these bouts.

He would come home to Great George Street after a long morning and afternoon at the hospital, and do some work: I think he was then beginning to write his thesis for M.B. at Cambridge. The house was not in full commission and we always dined out, sometimes at the cosmopolitan tables of Soho, more generally at the Savile Club, walking to it through St James Park by way of

the bridge, which, like certain other not unnumerous places, was for him "the best spot in London." I wish for myself that I could count and remember more clearly those evenings at the Savile: there is not a moment of them of which I would willingly surrender the memory. I can never think of his being in the least jaded after his day in Smithfield: if he was tired his interests were always entirely fresh, and they were very widespread. He knew about a good many things and persons, but whether he knew much or little of any subject, his views of it were always taken with sanity and vigour, and expressed in terms of a very happily incisive humour. His talk had a delightful quality of buoyancy; without being flippant it was always filled with strong gaiety and interest.

The winter passed in the same round of duties. At Easter (1900) came the end of his six months as junior house physician, and the beginning of the long expected six months of residence as senior. He had long looked forward eagerly to the more congenial work in the wards, to closer association with his physician, and to the full dignities and responsibilities of house physicianship. It was exactly at this moment that his physical breakdown came. In the middle of what seemed perfect health,—health which had survived the past hard winter, interrupted once or twice only by apparently unimportant colds,—he became aware that serious mischief was threatened and had even made definite advance in his lungs.

The blow fell without any warning. He was walking westward along Oxford Street when he became aware in a moment that a grave sign had presented itself in him. There was no softening of the revelation to him by preliminary doubt. Certainty of health was changed almost in a flash to conviction of serious danger: and to a man ambitious in his profession, and then on the threshold of a definite advance in it, even danger to life could hardly come more

bitterly than the probability of the wreck of his professional career, with the certainty of its interruption.

It was at a particular point on the north side of Oxford Street, —he shewed me afterwards,—that his eyes were opened. He turned east again in his walk and submitted himself at once to examination at the hospital. The result removed any doubt, if he had one, of his danger, though it gave hopes that the warning had come early rather than late. For the moment he had some idea of completing the summer's work which he had so keenly desired—and which he could never have again. After seeing Sir William Church however, he resigned his appointment, and set himself as diligently and systematically to play the right game in the part of patient as he had ever done in that of physician. Within the week he was at Davos, determined to get well.

The manner in which Eustace met this disaster shewed very clearly how securely lay the foundations of his character. The disaster itself seemed likely to divert the whole course of his life: it seemed then only too possible that, after obliterating his hopes of professional success, it might condemn to exile one who, beyond anyone I have met, loved to be in England, and when in England to be in London. Yet I think no one of his friends saw any trace of bitterness or of fear, in any word he said or wrote, whether at the beginning when the disappointment was fresh, or in the later months when prolonged hotel life at Davos brought him the keenest pangs of nostalgia for London, and for the fountain in the Square. He accepted with good humoured bravery the turn which the government of his affairs had brought him.

Happily, the mischief in his lungs was soon checked, and the re-establishment of his health made rapid progress. After a short autumn holiday at home he went out to Davos again to spend the winter.

After this it seemed nearly certain that the cure was complete:

and in point of fact by the following year he was justified in taking up his professional work again in London. As a precaution he went back to Davos for a holiday every winter after this, but no suspicion of that trouble arose again.

From the spring of 1901 he was able seriously to begin again the full current of his work. During his illness he had "marked time" only: he had read some German text-books, I think, and some special monographs at Davos, and he had exhaustively studied the modern methods for treatment of pulmonary consumption. His position at St Bartholomew's was ambiguous: he had not cut himself off from connexion with the school, and there were appointments still open to him: but he had not done full service as house physician, and there was danger of his being overlooked in favour of men who had gained upon him during his absence.

He arranged his plans with a view to the autumn examination for membership of the College of Physicians, and by way of getting his hand in again by work under pleasant conditions, he acted as *locum tenens* for the resident house physician at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, during part of that summer. The lawn in front of Addenbrooke's gives directly upon Trumpington Street, and in those hot afternoons of July and August the passers-by might expect generally to be refreshed by the sight of Eustace at tea time, stretching out his long and slippered limbs from the depths of a deck chair upon the grass, his forehead, deeply bronzed still after Davos, bent forward over a book.

This interlude at Cambridge had more than its ostensible object. It was at this time that a momentous question was being canvassed in his mind—the question of the nature and the scene of his future practice, and the various prospects of professional rewards. He was confronted with the common dilemma,—the uncertainties and

glories of consultant practice in London on one hand, the earlier and more certain rewards of the humbler general practice on the other. Decision to attempt the former implied gaining membership of the College of Physicians, and a long struggle, against great odds, towards a place on the senior staff at St Bartholomews, and towards consulting practice by slow degrees thereafter. The choice of general practice (which would be incompatible with membership of the College), involved further discussion of the most favourable scene of operations and the ways of entering upon it. The approaching membership examination made an early decision necessary.

Among almost endless possibilities, three definite schemes soon took shape in his mind. The first was the plan of "going for the bunker," as he said: of taking the membership and then standing the chance of promotion at the hospital and of consulting practice in London. The second plan was to buy a general practice which was available by purchase in Westminster, and which seemed to be offered at a price well below its value. The third was to come to Cambridge as a "squatter"; to put up a brass plate and to build his own general practice there.

The Westminster plan gave him the apparent certainty of immediate and probably growing income, with the advantages of London life, and perhaps also of a fractional home life at George Street, and moreover would allow always the sneaking hope of creeping into the consultant fold by the backstairs of general practice. But the information on which this scheme rested turned out to be faulty, and there it ended.

The proposed life at Cambridge was very tempting. He could rely on warm encouragement from several residents, and might well hope to gain a large undergraduate practice, and this without any purchase of goodwill. Added to the special amenities of the place for him, there was the attraction of the

great medical school to draw him, and the possibility of appointment at Addenbrooke's.

It was obvious however from the first that though he weighed diligently the alternative plans, his strong bias,—almost against his judgment, was in favour of "the great game," and to that he soon committed himself by entering for the membership examination in November. This he passed, and almost immediately afterwards started for his winter's holiday at Davos,—though not before it had leaked out, in the absence of any published order of merit, that he was considered to be the highest of all the candidates in the examination. He had a very gay Christmas that year at the Hotel Belvidere; he organised theatricals, he even went so far as to take a singing part himself, and he had now become enthusiastic and successful at curling. He felt that, with regard to medicine he had burnt his ships; taking membership of the College had now barred him from any but consulting practice, and he was well content as to that to await the future.

It was very soon after his return to London that a piece of good fortune came to him which gave him very material encouragement for the time of waiting that now confronted him. This was his appointment as medical officer to the Sun Life Insurance Office, by which he gained not only the foundation of a professional income, secure though modest, but also the opportunity of getting experience of the greatest value for the purposes of private, as opposed to hospital, practice. His work at the Sun Office moreover brought him to the immediate neighbourhood of St Bartholomew's and did not interfere with any of his opportunities for advancement at the Hospital. Meanwhile he had set up his flag in the West End—the flag in question being not the smallest (as he was careful to secure) of several brass plates upon the door of No. 10 Bentinck

Street, a house in which he had the use of a room for consultation.

The real centre however of his work during the remaining four years lay at St Bartholomew's, where all the professional issues most important to him were still to be decided. Here he worked almost daily. It was not long after his return that he stood for the post of Assistant Curator of the Museum—an office which in spite of its unpromising title not uncommonly marks a definite step in promotion towards the medical staff. In this capacity Eustace had to assist in the collection and preparation of morbid specimens for the museum and in their microscopical examination. Incidentally his duties kept him in touch with much of the best clinical work going on in the hospital; while they gave him unrivalled opportunities for balancing his own clinical knowledge by constant study of morbid anatomy—both gross and microscopic. He thoroughly enjoyed this work: the elaborate and delicate technical processes of microscopic work and the preparations for it taxed him rather severely, but it gave him training upon a side he had left uncultivated before. As his skill increased, he would often find occasion to indulge in jubilation over some finely stained microscopic section, exhibited whilst he was boiling the kettle for tea in the little room he used at the very top of the high medical school building.

Meanwhile in addition to his official duties, he was active during all this time in what may be called the domestic affairs of the medical school. He was editor of the hospital journal—work undertaken, like his editorship of the *Granta*, partly for love but also for gain; he was also President of the Abernethian Society—a position roughly equivalent in the medical school to Presidency of the Union at Cambridge. In these capacities, and much more on account of his own qualities, he was exercising to a remarkable degree a personal influence in the school at large. At this time

moreover a crisis had arisen in regard to the organisation of the students' affairs, which it was proposed to rearrange within the constitution of a Students' Union, composed of constituent students' clubs. Eustace gave to this a great deal of time and trouble, and he played a leading part in all the stages of discussion and legislation which led at last to the final and successful settlement.

Of this work of his, the *Hospital Journal* in its editorial article at a later time spoke in these terms:

> "If it had not been for Eustace Talbot, the foundation of the Students' Union would have been a thing of future rather than of past history; for, during the difficult months of organisation, he was at once the figure head and the Advisory Board of the students, tempering the enthusiasm of the promoters with his superior knowledge and sound judgment."

Two more steps of professional advance remain to be mentioned. At the end of 1903 he was selected as Assistant Physician at the City Road Hospital, and became thus a member of its permanent visiting staff. Further, in 1904 he was advised to stand for appointment as Casualty Physician at St Bartholomew's, and here also he was successful. This appointment could not fail to give him great pleasure, for his candidature had been an experiment he felt to be crucial. Failure would have involved something like a hint that his career at St Bartholomew's was not likely to bring him upon the senior staff: his success almost implied the contrary. In any case it allowed him to add to the relatively academic work among microtomes and formalin in his museum room, one of the finest opportunities of direct medical experience to be had in London, and it was with the keenest enjoyment that he began daily work again in the old Surgery, where it was his business to superintend the initial distribution of all cases coming to the Hospital.

With these multiplied duties, he began those last active months in which he seemed to us to be so clearly at the beginning of a secure progress in his professional powers and position. He was now of course very fully occupied. His work as Casualty Physician at St Bartholomew's, beginning at 9 o'clock on three mornings a week, was combined with work at the Sun Office as before, and with his new duties at the City Road, while as Assistant Curator he gave to the Museum the afternoons and early evenings of every day. No. 10 Bentinck Street, perhaps fortunately, did not yet claim much of his time. Yet he shewed no signs of being overtaxed. His health was now thoroughly reestablished and he took some pains to spend every week end if possible away from London. In this and in the previous year or two he had cultivated golf—very much indeed to Jim Harradine's horror—and he played commonly at the week ends either at Cassiobury Park with colleagues or at Cambridge with us.

In those early months of 1905 indeed, memory of him gives a picture of the most triumphant health. In spite of the hard work he came back to, he seemed never to lose, month after month, the colour he had brought from Davos at Christmas. I think of him on many week ends of that spring as astonishingly radiant in health and spirits—though Saturday afternoon followed a long week spent in Smithfield, and by Sunday night he was again in London for the early work on Monday morning. This health was more I think than health of body: he was at last free to be confident of his powers and confident of the future. He had threaded the chief early shoals of his passage and at last open water lay before him: he had gained his opportunities and it seemed very clear that he was not now by bodily weakness to lose them. That this happiness in his work and in his fitness for it, and happiness in so much beside, should have come to him and been part of his life

before the end, is at least an unalterable good for all of us who love him.

I have given what account I can of the external events of his training and of the stages of his actual professional advance. To those who knew Eustace it will seem very unimportant to discuss the degree of eminence which the future here might have held for him. Was there any one to whom worldly success would have come so unregarded or have brought so little alteration? We know that in technical skill the work he had begun to do shewed clearly enough the likelihood of his being at least prominent in his profession. As to this I leave far better judges to speak.

Sir William Church, of whose relations to Eustace something has been said already, wrote to me of him as follows:

"No one who saw much of him can doubt that if he had lived, he would have taken a high position in time in his profession. I do not know if he was ambitious, but his ability, thoroughness of work and unfailing sense of duty could not have failed to mark him out among men of his own standing."

The present Senior Physician at St Bartholomew's, Dr Norman Moore—than whom none saw more of Eustace in his work or gave him more friendly help at every opportunity—wrote of him:

"He had all the qualities which physicians in England have considered proper to their profession: a love of learning of every kind, an acuteness in natural observation, a reasoning but not a sceptical turn of mind, a kindly feeling towards all mankind, a special regard for the learned and for the poor; and with these qualities I believe he would have come to belong to the best medical circle of his time.

"The progress of most physicians is slow and their career arduous. They have many steps to mount and trials on the way:

"Full little knowest thou, that hast not tried,
What hell it is in suing long to bide:
To lose good dayes, that might be better spent;
To waste long nights in pensive discontent;
To speed to-day, to be put back to-morrow;
To feed on hope, to pine with feare and sorrow.

Talbot, had his health continued good, would have overcome all these difficulties and would have become physician to St Bartholomew's Hospital and a memorable person there and in the College of Physicians."

"A memorable person,"—that, surely, he could never have failed to be. In whatever measure technical excellence might have brought him worldly rewards, we know, as we knew him, that the interest and vigour of his personality must have given him an exceptional place as time passed on. We know too that English Medicine will be the poorer for his going; for there is no noble profession which does not suffer an inestimable loss when there is taken from it a strong and pure character. These qualities Eustace had, and beneath his purity and strength there lay the deep springs which gave him directness of aim, and an essential nobility of purpose.

III

I wish that the first moments of an acquaintance that was to grow into a friendship were more sharply engraved in my memory than they actually are. I can indeed recollect the occasion when I first met Eustace: some one—it would be a satisfaction to be able to say who it was, but I cannot now tell—had told me to see him when he came up; and very early in his first term he spent an evening in my rooms in Fellows' Buildings. Ronny Norman was there too; and Eustace at once took his due place in our affections, and became a part of life. Perhaps it is enough to be able to recall that; but I do regret that I cannot set down in detail the impressions of that first evening; or, for that matter, of many which followed. There were various regular occasions of meeting. Eustace joined the T. A. F. (= Twice a Fortnight), a small society which supped together on Sunday evenings; and he also became a member of the Chit Chat, which met on Saturday nights to read papers and discuss them. (He read one paper himself; it was on Weismann's Theory of Heredity.) But neither these occasions nor the more frequent and more prized domiciliary visits furnish me with such little picturesque touches of incident as I should personally like to possess. What does emerge is the consciousness of a great new possession in the accession of Eustace as a friend.

The life and beauty of his face and of all his outward self—as notable then as afterwards—began by attracting and prepared you to like him. It was a pleasure, always, to look at him. Then, his

manner, which was, to say the least, never constrained or difficult (remember that I am thinking of him as he was in early days, and comparing him with many generations of freshmen: and forgive the absurdity of coupling his name with such adjectives), his manner made the progress of acquaintance so easy. It was quickly helped on by his humour and his interest in things literary and artistic. The humour was overflowing and the taste sound and conspicuously reasonable even then. Beyond that you divined, without any word spoken, that his heart was right towards his home and towards the things that are not seen.

So much, I say, there was apparent within a very short time that stirred the desire to make him into a friend and helped in the process. It was not long before other qualities made themselves felt. Perhaps most of all a general strength, a capability of dealing with men and things and of inspiring confidence, a largeness of view and a serenity which made him great, and would have brought him to the front not only in the profession of his choice, but, as I think, in any other. If love and affection had not been so wonderfully strong in him, I might have used a rather chilly Greek word and called him *αὐταρκής*: but it would only be applicable in so far as it means that he had great resources in himself: ridiculously inapplicable if it conveys the idea of aloofness from human interests.

After all, I do not know that while friends are still at our call we ought to pause and reckon up their characteristics and reflect why we love them. I do know that in the companionship of Eustace there was a secure delight,—you were certain of being happy with him whether he was in the mood for discussing people or books, or inclined to play games, or disposed to sit and smoke without saying much, he was (I can summon no better phrase) a great possession.

There is no Cambridge friend of his, I think, who would not

agree in the general drift of what I have been saying; though without affectation, there are many who would have said it more effectively. But details have their place in such recollections as these, as well as general impressions; and it is the presentment of these that is the real difficulty: so few are the episodes that are not too formless and vague to be transferred to writing. Yet, small as they are, they must be put down, and the more frivolous first.

Nothing was pleasanter, I used to think, than to watch Eustace listening to the disquisitions of James McBryde (now to God passed) with a sort of surprised delight in his fertility of imagination and powers of description. They were both artists in language. Eustace's vocabulary was the more allusive and literary: he had a constantly varying stock of phrases—some derived from Pickwick, others from his London patients, which were a constant joy. "He knows a trick worth a good half-dozen of that" was one of the Pickwick texts which I account peculiarly his own. "It's the 'orrible [bronchitis or other disorder], doctor" was a favourite hospital phrase, accompanied by the spreading of an expansive hand over his chest. "An old one, but worth trying" was the invariable rebuke when his opponent at picquet made a miscalculation, which was, naturally, always attributed to design.

There was a pleasantry of long standing connected with some cigars in my possession upon which Eustace considered that he had a lien. He took it very ill if they were offered to anyone else, usually inquiring suspiciously whether Owen Smith or Walter Fletcher had been "at them," and receiving an answer in the affirmative with severe disapproval: then selecting one with much shaking of the head and protrusion of the lower lip, and consuming it perhaps with an air of injury: or, if mollified, with the hand spread out over his chest, and other expressions of enjoyment.

I only had one experience of him as a travelling companion.

This was in 1894 when I visited some French cathedrals with him and A. B. Ramsay. Nobody could be more entirely satisfactory than Eustace in such circumstances. He took to the churches at once; and it may be imagined how he entered into all the little incidents which an expedition of that kind produces. He rarely expressed himself in the language of the country, save in one conversation with the hotel cook at Bourges, who took his fancy. Him he beckoned to him, and spoke with him for some time in a very mixed dialect, of which I have often tried to remember specimens, but without avail. He was what I may call impish at a wedding upon which we happened at Bourges Cathedral; borrowing money of me when a collection was being made, and refusing to contribute it at the proper moment, or to return it subsequently. I have not often enjoyed him more than during that fortnight.

In everything, serious or light, his perception of what was good commended itself. The greatest music, or architecture, or poetry, and the best fun of the last five years; Chartres Cathedral and Dan Leno; he knew them both for what they were. Ready to acknowledge excellence wherever he saw it, he found no necessity to condemn Wagner because he liked Handel, or Dickens because he loved Meredith. "What is best he firmly lit upon, as birds on sprays:" and how full his life was the pages that precede these have amply shown.

I have said nothing about his attitude towards religion, except that it could be divined. The fact is, that only on the rarest occasions was it spoken of between us. One such occasion was the eve of Walter Fletcher's marriage, when Eustace and I, late in the evening, walked about the garden of Ellergreen, and spoke of James McBryde, then quite recently dead. He then told me something of what he thought and had seen of death: how easy

it seemed was the process of dying: how evident it was to him that death was not the end: and how sure he had come to be that love was at the back of it all. What he said only served to confirm that which I already believed as to the general trend of his thoughts about God, Death, and Life; but it made me earnestly desire to hear more of his thoughts. That talk, however, was the last of its kind.

The *completeness* of Eustace is what comes forward perhaps most prominently upon a general survey. There seems to be no single one of the great human activities with which he could not sympathize, and there were few in which he was not qualified to take part. I think of him as an embodiment of life, strength, humour, and affection; a presence always hailed with delight, for whom it was impossible to outstay his welcome. He is a keystone in the structure of many lives, and, like almost all who enlist affection, he was absolutely unconscious of how much difference he made.

These little formless recollections need every apology. They are meagre, disjointed and trivial; they do no sort of justice to their subject. It must be remembered that, much as I saw of Eustace, my intercourse with him was hedged about with reticences. In most memoirs a large space is devoted to subjects which between us were left to be understood in silence. I do not know whether there was more of advantage or disadvantage in this attitude; but at least it was natural to both of us, however much, for reasons not wholly selfish, one may regret it now.

But an end must be made; and the most fitting is the thought, which is present whenever we think of Eustace, of thanks to the faithful Creator who gave us this friend and promises us a continuance of his friendship.

APPENDIX.

We have thought it well to subjoin to the foregoing extracts from three short notices which appeared in the *Cambridge Review*, the *Lancet* and the *British Medical Journal* for June 1, June 3 and June 17, 1905, respectively.

The Cambridge Review, June 1, 1905.

On Friday, May 26th, in the early morning, died Eustace Talbot, aged thirty-two years. He was on the threshold of a most distinguished career, so far as could be foreseen, as a physician; and happiness of another kind had just dawned upon his life. Death came to him at a moment when it was especially hard to go hence and be no more seen; but he met that which was appointed for him with the spirit of a truly brave and loving and faithful man.

Anyone would sorrow at the thought of a life, full not only of promise but of achievement, so ended; but Eustace Talbot's friends do not think so much about the success which is not now to be on the lips of men. Their desire, or at least the desire of the one who writes these words, is to keep in lively remembrance his nobility, his lovableness, his truth; and besides these, his many keen interests in books, in art and music and sport, and his fine and catholic sense of humour; and for all this and much more to cherish the thought of him, and to render thanks alike to the Giver and to him who was given, for the good and the delight which his companionship brought to them.

Winchester, Trinity, and St Bartholomew's Hospital were principal scenes of his activities. Here at Cambridge, he entered most fully into the life of the place: it will be remembered how he played tennis for the University, held office at the Pitt Club and at the A.D.C., and edited the *Granta*. At a later time there were serious signs of lung trouble, and he was obliged to spend several winters at Davos, where his circle of friends, already large, was greatly enriched. It could not but be so: no one saw Eustace Talbot without wishing to be his friend, and his heart was large enough to take in the new-comers and not shut out the old.

"His departure is taken for misery, and his going from us to be utter destruction...yet is his hope full of immortality." They are very old words, that we hear upon All Saints' Day, and very often quoted: not often more justly than in the case of the friend who for the time is hidden out of our sight.

Lancet, June 3, 1905.

To those who did not know him it is impossible to give any idea of Eustace Talbot's personal charm, and for those who did know him it is superfluous to attempt it. The fascination of his personality was due principally to his absolute sincerity and honesty, combined with a lively humour and a temper which nothing could disturb; to these were added a wide experience of the various circles of society, in all of which he was a welcome guest, and a ready appreciation of the good points of those with whom he was thrown. At St Bartholomew's the blank he has left will be filled only with happy memories:

"no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise, or blame, nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us."

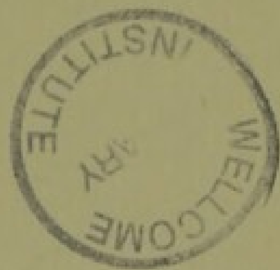
British Medical Journal, June 17, 1905.

Talbot was well known at Cambridge, well known in London, and specially well known at St Bartholomew's Hospital. He was possessed of great personal charm, and probably no man of his age ever had more friends or was more welcome in a greater variety of circles. For his interests in life were multiple: science and literature, politics, art and sports. All of these appealed to him and he to their adherents. It is on St Bartholomew's and its medical school that his loss falls primarily and most severely, for in connexion with that institution the flower of promise had already been followed by fruit. Those, however, who watch the careers of the younger men in London, less from interest in the individual than in hopes of discerning a man who is not only coming, but deserves to come, think that in Talbot's death the profession at large has likewise sustained a loss.

In addition to excellent mental endowments which had not lacked ample cultivation, there was about the man an undefinable quality of strength and great purpose. He seemed unconsciously to influence those with whom he was brought into contact, and certainly was a source of inspiration to many of the younger men about him. Untrammelled as he was by those difficulties which beset so many able men, the path to success seemed to lie straight before him, for he had shaken off entirely a chest trouble which at one time threatened his career, and that anything else untoward would occur seemed unlikely.

If this were all, there might be nothing to be said, for success, financial, social, or scientific, comes to many men; and, whether it comes to one individual or to another, is usually of little interest to the world at large.

There are, however, exceptions to this rule, and Talbot would probably have proved one of them. That he would have come into prominence as a clinical physician is practically certain, but there was also that about him which seemed calculated to make his future success a thing of more importance to others than himself and his friends. He seemed in short, to those who had studied him, to be a man who, when he had matured in years and experience, would, sooner or later, come to occupy a position which is not often filled—that of a physician who, though without extraordinary talent in any special medical direction, yet influences the profession widely and favourably, both in its internal relations and in its external connexion with the world around it.



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