

Manuel Toussaint / [Benjamin Bandera].

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Bandera, Benjamin.

Publication/Creation

[Place of publication not identified] : [publisher not identified], [1931]

Persistent URL

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MANUEL TOUSSAINT

BENJAMIN BANDERA, MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

ONE of the most outstanding figures in the contemporary medical world was Dr. Manuel Toussaint. He was a physician endowed with vast knowledge, a wise and experienced clinician, a skilful and careful surgeon, and a gentleman above reproach. In him were thus combined so many excellent qualities that it has been difficult to find anyone to replace him.

Dr. Toussaint was born in the city of Puebla in 1860. He began the study of medicine in Puebla but later, in 1884, after an examination at the capital he was given the title of physician and surgeon. He began his professional career by serving in the Military Medical Corps and was commissioned to go to Europe to study hygiene. Eager to learn, he went to Germany and after having fulfilled the object of his commission he took up the study of other branches of medicine, such as bacteriology, histology, and pathological anatomy, which, in those days, were not very far advanced in our country. Under professors of note, such as Virchow and Weigert, Koch, Fraenkel and Petri, he studied these important subjects for three years. He completed his studies abroad by taking courses in surgery under the direction of Bergmann and Kuster and in medicine under Linden and Senator. He then went to France where he pursued his favorite studies further.

He returned to Mexico eager to apply his knowledge. First, he became affiliated with the National Medical Institute, in which he rendered important service in the school of medicine. Here after a competitive examination he taught histology, and had charge of the department of pathological anatomy which was created especially for him. Finally in the Institute of Pathological Anatomy he did work of great interest which is referred to later.

His work as a surgeon began in the hospital of Jesus of Nazareth, founded by Cortes, and was continued in the Hospital de la Beneficencia Francesa, of which he was director. He was especially interested in surgery of the stomach and bile tract, in which work he acquired great skill.

An old calculous cholecystitis which had seriously affected his liver and for which he was operated upon a little while before his death by one of his pupils, was the cause of the death of this master—a master in the highest sense of the word—in September 4, 1927. He who knew the anatomy of the liver to the

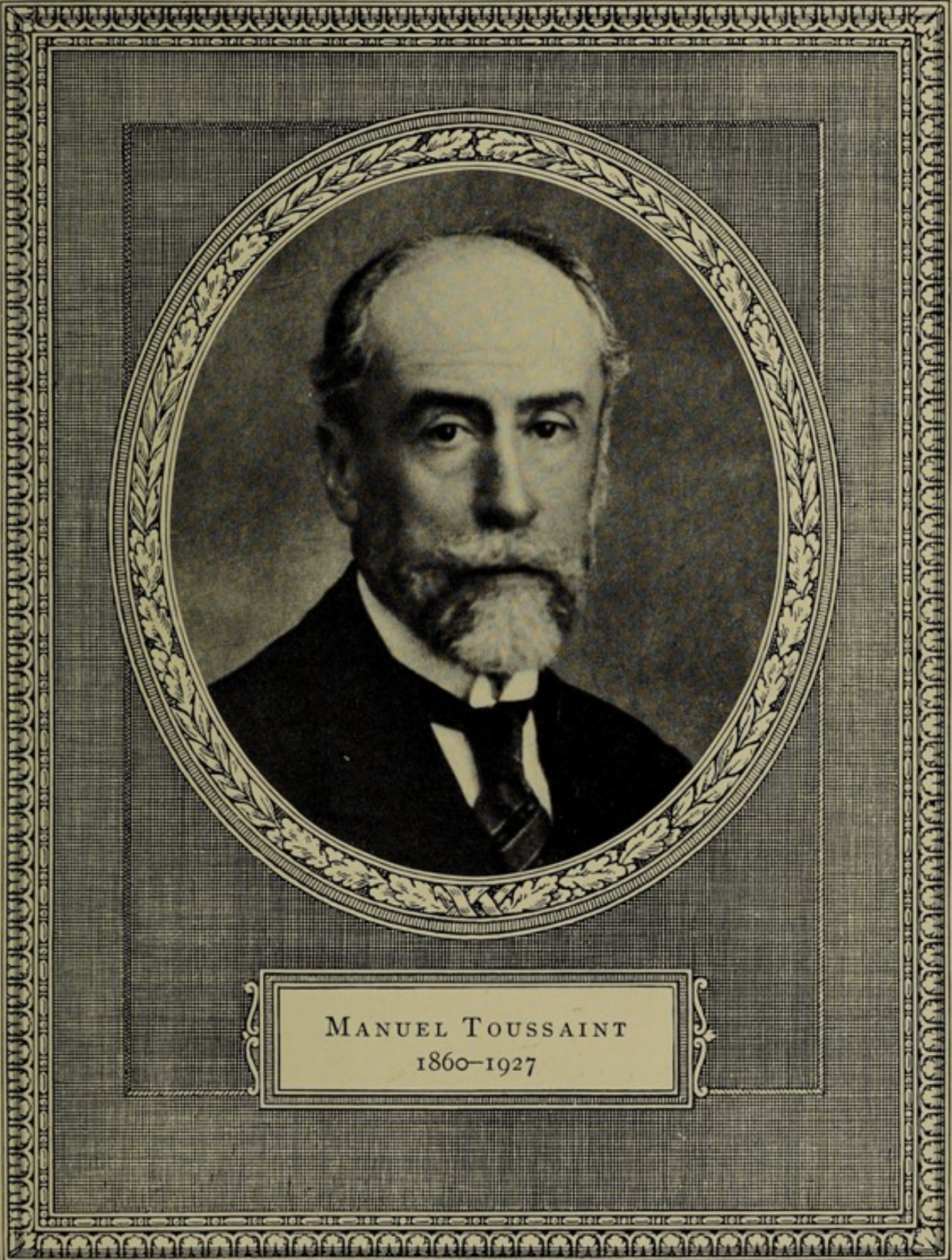
most minute detail, he who was master of hepatic pathology and who had removed many lesions of the liver died of the disease of which he had so many times cured others, as if haughty death took this way to avenge himself on his conqueror.

The scientific work of Dr. Toussaint was concerned particularly with pathological anatomy. His study of cirrhosis is worthy of mention; he set forth ideas now accepted by such clinicians as Sergeant but which he propounded many years before. He studied the etiology of typhoid and, indeed, ate infected substances to see if they would produce the infection, but fortunately they did not. He has published in different medical journals articles on his studies of actinomycosis, rhinoscleroma, intestinal pneumatosis, the cytology of the blood in syphilitis and, as well, on many other subjects.

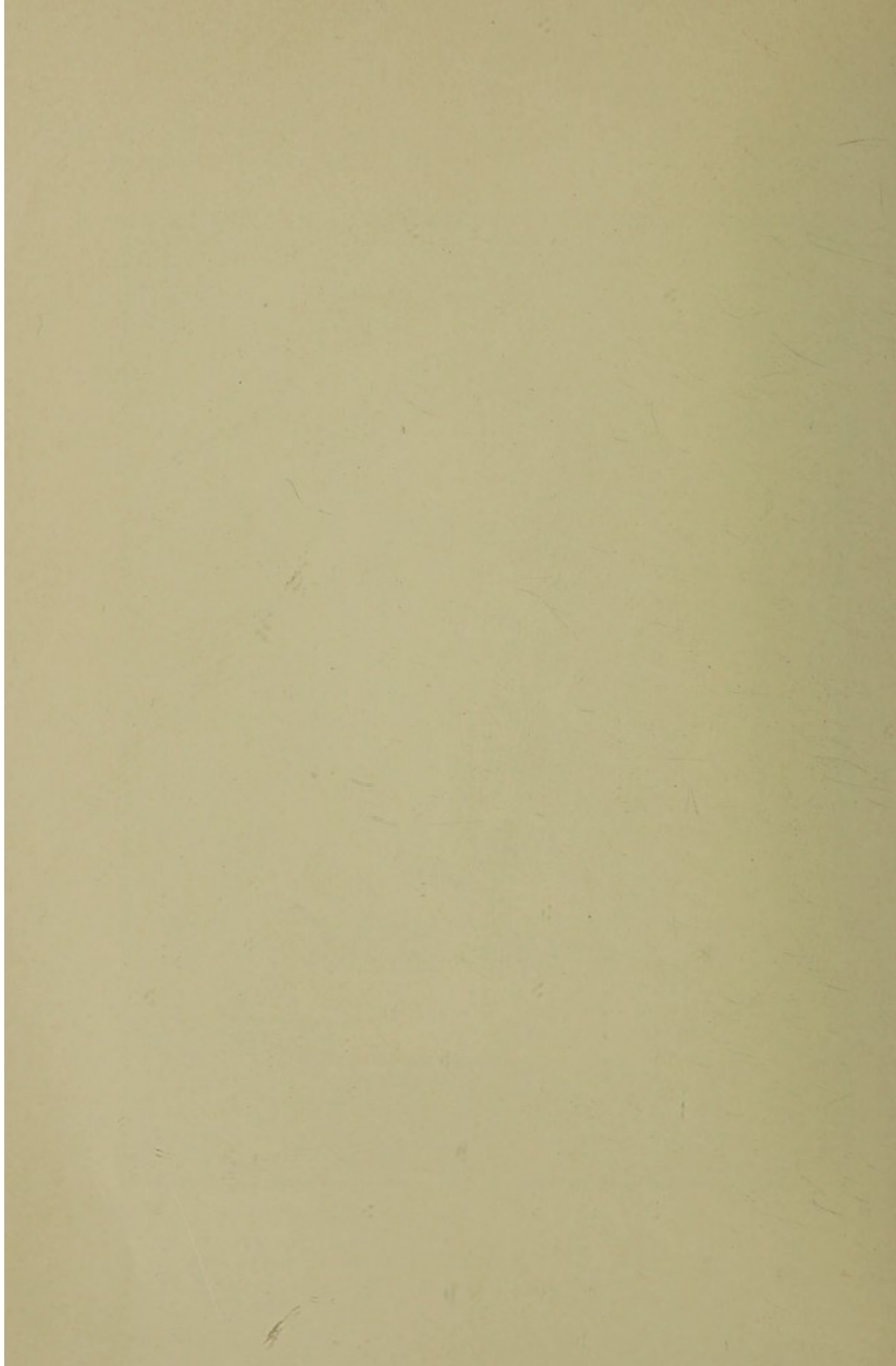
He filled many honorary posts and commissions and left in them all indelible traces of his brilliance. He was a colonel in the Medical Corps, director of the Institute of Pathological Anatomy of the General Hospital and the Hospital de la Beneficencia Francesa, professor of the school of medicine, doctor of the National University, and member of the University Council, of the Mexican Medical Association and, as well, of various foreign scientific societies.

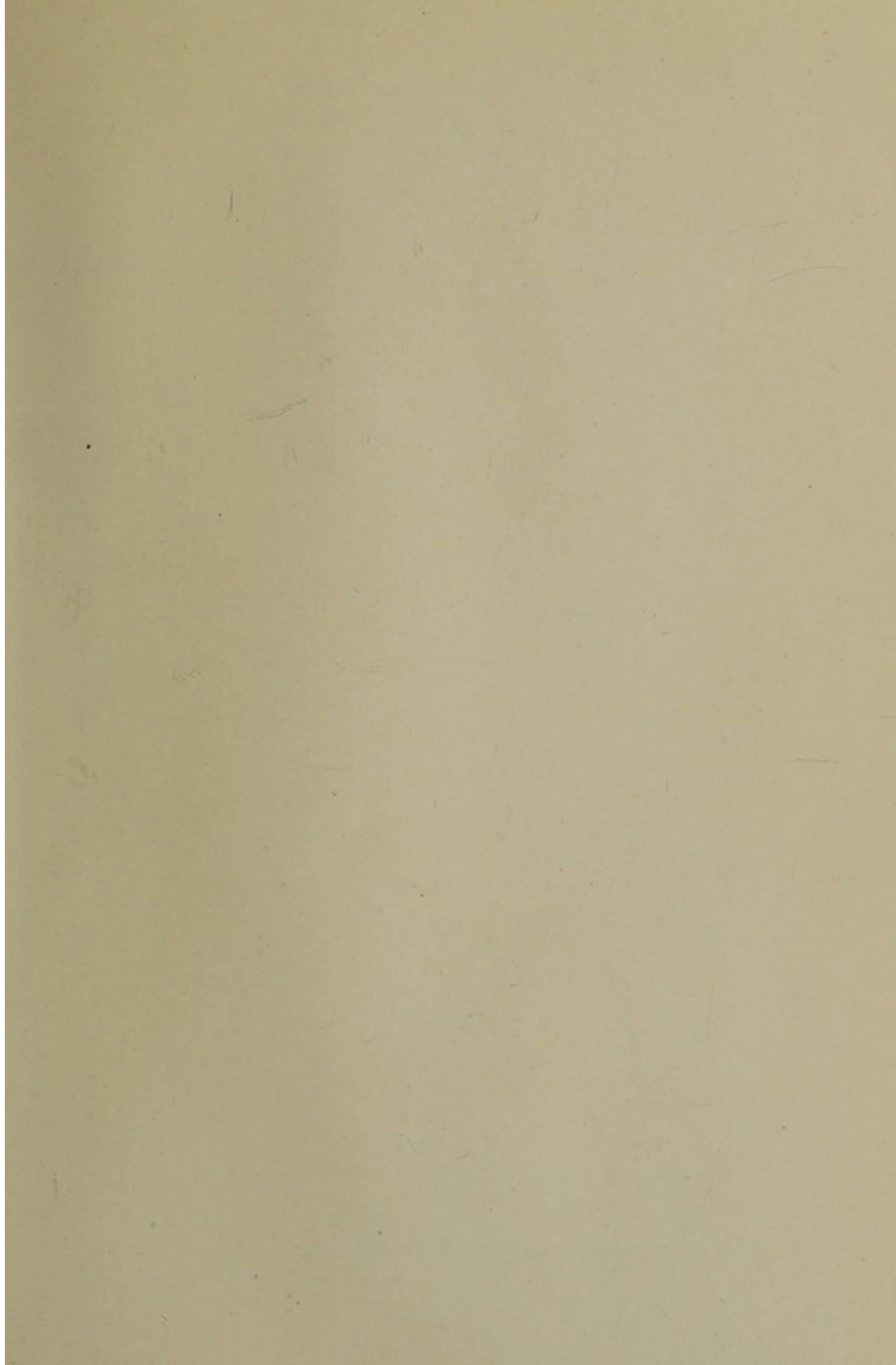
He was a representative of his country at different international congresses, once in Russia and another time in Buenos Aires. This enabled him again to visit the principal European medical clinics as well as those of the South American republics.

This is but a rough sketch of the career of Dr. Toussaint. To all who knew and associated with him he was known as a man who did honor to his country as he would have done honor to any country in which he might have been born, and so it is fitting that, as a just homage to the wise physician and the noble and generous man, his name be included with those who have done much to advance surgery in the Americas.



MANUEL TOUSSAINT
1860-1927





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