

### SCOTTISH NURSES' CLUB.

The Marchioness of Ailsa, President of the Scottish Nurses' Club, presided on March 28th at its Annual Meeting, held at 203, Bath Street, Glasgow.

Before commencing the business, the President paid a high tribute to the late Dr. McGregor Robertson, and said that the members desired to place on record their sense of the irreparable loss the club had sustained. It was largely owing to his watchful care that the club had attained to its present position.

His heart was in this work, and his great object was not only to raise the status of the nursing profession but also to make such provision for the needs of the nurses that they would be enabled more efficiently to fulfil their ministry. How successfully he did that work they all knew, and they could never forget their indebtedness to and their happy association with so strong and distinguished a personality. Lady Ailsa moved that an expression of their appreciation of the great services rendered by Dr. McGregor Robertson to the club and of their sincere regret at his passing be recorded in the minutes and an excerpt thereof be sent to Mrs. McGregor Robertson.

Nurse Campbell, supporting the resolution, expressed in the name of the members of the club their deep sense of appreciation of the devoted work of Dr. McGregor Robertson not only for the club, but for the nursing profession generally, and how deeply they felt the loss of such a friend.

A message of sympathy from the Royal British Nurses' Association was then read.

#### A Medical Appreciation.

Dr. A. K. Chalmers, Medical Officer of Health for the City of Glasgow, and a close personal friend of Dr. McGregor Robertson, then spoke of his work in a wider field, and said Dr. McGregor Robertson had acted as Chairman of a meeting which was addressed by Col. Harrison. It was the last lecture of a course designed to instruct the public in matters relating to health, and the hall was filled by an eager audience. In a few graceful sentences he introduced the Lecturer, and at the close of the lecture he expressed the appreciation of the audience. On both occasions he spoke with great deliberation and with grave emphasis on the issues with which Col. Harrison had been dealing. On concluding he resumed his seat, and in a few moments was dead.

These were the closing incidents in a life of service and few things are fitted to impress the imagination so vividly as the manner of its ending.

We met as students fifty years ago, when as yet neither of us had begun the study of medicine. He was then, as through all his after years, an eager, ardent spirit, seeking the path of duty by the light of knowledge and following it unflinchingly. He was a keen observer and had the gift which developed with the passing years—of rapidly marshalling the facts of observation and of arranging them with unerring sequence. From the first he was an effective speaker.

Dr. Robertson graduated in Arts at Glasgow University in 1876, and in Medicine (with Honours) in 1880. After some time spent in study in Germany, he returned to Glasgow, and in 1881 was appointed first Muirhead Demonstrator in Physiology and Assistant to Professor McKendrick, who then occupied the chair of the Institutes of Medicine in the University. In 1884 he published a volume on "Physiological Physics," an aspect of Physiology then just beginning to claim attention; and three years later a textbook on Human Physiology. The "Household Physician" was first published in 1890, and has since gone through several revisions. Other papers followed, and, interestingly enough, his last published paper (1923) had the somewhat unusual but suggestive title of the "Quality of Freshness in Food and Light and their Relation to Health and Growth."

A rapidly growing private practice soon, however, began to claim both time and energy, and it was in this field that he ultimately became widely known over a large area of Scotland. I have heard patients speak of him in terms both of admiration and love. His early training in physiological research found expression in practice in research at the bedside. He worked much in a private laboratory in his own home, and papers such as one on the "Clinical Examination of the Blood especially by means of stained films" were the fruit. For the naming of disease by the presence of particular symptoms he had, I think, little regard. What was of first importance to him was that he should discover the particular function of the body which was deranged, and until that was satisfied the naming of the disease might wait. It was characteristic of him that he always exacted from himself a high standard of endeavour, and in this respect he was himself his own most severe critic. Easy paths in life had no attraction for him until conscience had been satisfied that they were not merely mental by-paths to escape the worry of thrashing out a reasoned conviction.

An eloquent testimony to the position which he had won for himself in public esteem came in what have proved to be his later years, when the Parish Council of Glasgow in 1922 asked him to re-organise the medical administration of Stobhill Hospital.

During the war he acted as Honorary Consulting Physician to the R.N. Hospital, Bute. He was also Visiting Physician to the Princess Louise Scottish Hospital for Limbless Sailors and Soldiers.

He was a member of the Scottish Committee of the British Medical Association and Chairman of the Scottish Branch of the National Council for Combating Venereal Diseases. For some years he was on the Council of the Royal Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow, of which he was a Fellow.

In this connection it is fitting that I should acknowledge the exceedingly valuable help he ungrudgingly gave the Corporation in their efforts to reduce the ravages of social impurity.

Here, as indeed in all the welfare work of the Health Committee of the Corporation, he was keenly interested and always helpful.

The ranks of Medicine in Glasgow have been sadly thinned within comparatively recent months by the loss of men each brilliant in his own department—Macewen, Dalziel, Kennedy, Duncan, Robertson—but each has left a record which would do honour to any medical school, and their example remains as a stimulus.

Dr. Robertson possessed in an uncommon degree, I think, the clear insight and fluidity of expression which would have made him a successful teacher of Medicine, had private practice not claimed him. But he brought to the bedside of his patients the very latest methods of Laboratory and Clinical Research, and he won the esteem of his fellows as a practitioner of the highest order.

The President, in the course of a short address, stated that the present was the seventh annual meeting of the club, and commented on the faithful and consistent work of the Secretary, Miss M. R. Stewart, R.G.N. She remarked that for two years the members had been in the enjoyment of the extended premises of the club, and said they must have come to realise more fully the boon that beautiful house was to the nursing profession. She urged that each member should rise to share in the responsibilities of the management of the club, and to be strong and courageous in opposing every element which threatened to interfere with the well-being of the house. Life was a team game, and every one of them should cultivate the qualities of loyalty and fair play, which would enable them to fulfil their responsibilities, not only as nurses, but as good citizens in the greater world without.

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