

## Obituary.

ANGUS FRASER, M.D.,

CONSULTING PHYSICIAN, ABERDEEN ROYAL INFIRMARY.

THE many friends of Dr. Angus Fraser and the hundreds of medical graduates of Aberdeen scattered all over the world will hear with feelings of deep regret of his death, which occurred on April 2nd at his residence in Aberdeen; his outstanding personality and his untiring services for medical education and the medical charities earned the gratitude of the whole community, and commanded the respect and admiration of those who were privileged to know him.

Born in Aberdeen on Christmas Day, 1838, the son of a successful merchant, he received his early education in Aberdeen, and took his Arts Course in Marischal College. After a distinguished career, in which he gained the Boxhill Mathematical Bursary, he graduated M.A. in 1858. In 1862 he graduated with honours in medicine, and continued his medical studies for some time in the hospitals of Paris. On his return to his native place he acted for two years as Assistant to Professor Brazier in the Chair of Chemistry. Shortly after commencing the practice of his profession, he was appointed one of the Physicians of the Aberdeen Dispensary, which post he held until 1871, when he was appointed one of the Physicians of the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. Here he found the field for his life's work, and for the long period of thirty-eight years he was an honoured and zealous worker, bringing healing and comfort to the sick, and filling with enthusiasm hundreds of eager students who flocked to benefit by his teaching. And few men were better equipped for the work of clinical teaching than Dr. Fraser. He was an accomplished chemist, and his investigations on urinary calculi and the constituents of urine were admirable pieces of work. At a time when the microscope was little used Dr. Fraser was an expert microscopist and a pathologist of no mean order. His acquaintance with medical literature was wide and minute, and when to those acquirements were added that of an acute, logical intellect, and a keen sympathy with students, it was not to be wondered that he became the Clinical Teacher of the Medical School and the favourite of the students.

For Dr. Fraser was a students' man, not alone from his sympathy with them, nor for his stores of knowledge placed at their disposal, but for his approachableness and

comradeship. No air of mystery surrounded him. There was no aloofness. He was one of themselves. In the ward, though ready to communicate, he was as willing to receive and discuss. Here he was at his best, and it was an interesting and rather amusing sight to see him and his students grouped round a patient, with heads close together, listening for some obscure bruit through his multiple stethoscope, humorously called "Fraser's octopus."

And to the end of his career Dr. Fraser remained in the front rank as a clinical teacher. He worked hard and read extensively, and his medical library was perhaps the finest private library in Scotland. (It has been bequeathed to the Aberdeen Medico-Chirurgical Society.) When the Chair of Pathology was founded in the University, he attended the practical class to get in touch with the latest

methods in pathology and bacteriology. His room in the infirmary was richly equipped with every apparatus to assist him in his work, and his students had opportunities of seeing and practising methods of investigation in bacteriology, chemistry, and pathology which are usually handed over to specialists on these subjects.

In treatment his methods were simple and conservative. Although willing to try the newer remedies he preferred the old, and knew exactly what he could accomplish by them.

Not the least of the services he rendered to the infirmary was that which followed an after-dinner speech delivered nearly thirty years ago, in which he criticized its equipment and its management. Though his remarks were ill received by the directorate at the time, they led to an alteration in the management, to reconstruction, and an extension of the buildings, which have culminated in the modern and up-

to-date pile which is a credit to the city and to the medical school.

Another of the medical charities with which Dr. Fraser's name must always be intimately associated is the District Nursing Association. Along with Miss Catherine Lumsden he took a leading part in its inauguration, and he occupied the chair of management from the commencement till about three years ago. Through his efforts the present home was procured and furnished, and his patronage was a guarantee to the community of the value of the scheme. There was deep regret when he felt the burden of years made it necessary to sever his connexion with this institution.

As time passed he built up a large private practice, and became the leading consultant in the North of Scotland. His personality, his skill, and his optimism begat



Photograph by]

DR. ANGUS FRASER.

[Messrs Morgan, Aberdeen



confidence, and brought cheer where he could not bring healing. He was no alarmist to magnify the minor ailments, and he used humorously to say that some of his patients refused to send for him because all he did for them was to put them to bed.

From his student days he retained his connexion with the University, serving it as Lecturer, Examiner, Assessor, and Representative on the General Medical Council, and took a keen interest in all connected with medical education and university work. To these he brought a business capacity, energy, and an intimate knowledge of the requirements of the times that were invaluable in shaping the future of medical education. He was Examiner in Medicine from 1869 to 1872. In 1839 he was elected one of the Assessors of the University Court, which office he held unopposed until last year. He was appointed University Representative to the General Medical Council in 1892, and was Convener of the Finance Committee, taking an active part in the University extension. In 1901 the University showed its appreciation of his services by conferring on him the degree of LL.D.

In politics Dr. Fraser was an advanced Liberal. He served for several years as Chairman of St. Nicholas Ward Committee, and was Chairman of the Aberdeen Liberal Association when the split in the Liberal Party occurred over Home Rule. He was an ideal chairman, and turbulent spirits felt that a strong hand grasped the reins. He was active in securing the return to Parliament of his friend, the Right Honourable James Bryce, with whom, and with Mrs. Bryce, Dr. Fraser had a warm friendship. His politics, unfortunately, formed a bar to his obtaining the Chair of Medicine in the University after the death of Dr. Smith Shand, as somewhat ungenerously a section of his political opponents strenuously opposed what would have been a most popular and well-deserved appointment and a generous acknowledgement of the merits of an opponent. This disappointment did not embitter Dr. Fraser in the least, nor turn him aside from his work. His Liberalism increased with his years, and only a few weeks before his death he remarked to the writer how much he was in sympathy with many proposals of the present time that were regarded as socialistic and extreme, and his belief that they would become commonplaces in the politics of the next generation.

Dr. Fraser was Physician to the Aberdeen Deaf and Dumb Institution, Medical Officer of the Aberdeen Post Office Staff, and Certifying Surgeon for the Factories. For twenty-eight years he was connected with the Volunteer movement, and on his retirement held the office of Brigade Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel in the 1st Volunteer Battalion Gordon Highlanders.

Dr. Fraser was unmarried, and is survived by his sister, Mrs. Adamson, widow of the late Rev. T. N. Adamson, Barnhill, Broughty Ferry.

One who was closely associated with Dr. Fraser writes:

Although Dr. Angus Fraser had been living in retirement for the past three years or so, still the news of his death gave rise to the feeling of personal loss to very many, to whom his figure had been so familiar during the long period of his professional life as physician, or with whom he had been actively engaged in the administration of public institutions or in political matters. His was a personality which made itself felt in whatever sphere of action he was for the time being employed, and which showed itself, perhaps, most happily when he was in his hospital wards.

As a clinical teacher he had a high and well-deserved reputation amongst his colleagues and his students, and many of the latter, now scattered far and wide, have ever eagerly given testimony to his powers of exposition. He was accurate in diagnosis, clear and neat-handed in demonstration, ready to try with an open mind all new instruments of precision, possessed of a wonderfully accurate memory of methods and of cases. From his early undergraduate days onwards he showed special interest in chemistry, which for a period he taught in the university during the absence of the professor, and he was always ready to employ his knowledge in the clinical observation of complex cases involving accurate urinary analysis, which was a field he had made peculiarly his own. Furthermore, in the early days of pathology as an exact science he succeeded in making himself familiar with

section cutting and staining, and became an expert microscopist; so that the establishment of a Chair of Pathology in the university was welcomed by him, and he became a member of the first class taught by the late Professor Hamilton, although by that time he was busily engaged in the practice of his profession and had charge of wards in the hospital.

His ability was early recognized by his teachers, and the late Dr. Kilgour, whose name is still familiar amongst us as a master of medicine, showed him especial favour, so that in the course of time Dr. Fraser became the natural successor to his practice, and very soon attained a wide reputation as a consultant in the North of Scotland.

While thus busily employed in teaching and in his private work he found his relaxation, for the most part, in his library, which on the medical side was remarkably extensive, being drawn from English, American, and French sources, and in the lightest of current literature, a taste for which he shared with at least one very well-known *littérateur* whose views on the subject are well known to many.

He was interested in all the new devices which could be turned to account in his teaching, and, indeed, in all things of modern mechanical type, from stethoscopes to typewriters, lithographing and printing outfits, gramophones, and motor cars, of which he always had the latest approved models. So also in his reading, though by no means unmindful of the classic clinical teachers for whom he had the greatest reverence combined with an accurate knowledge of their writings, new editions immediately on their publication replaced the older ones, were carefully but rapidly read, and the true as well as the new critically examined and retained for use.

He was essentially of the town, and took his holidays—which in late years became infrequent—for the most part in London and Paris, where he haunted bookshops and instrument makers, to return home eager to test some new acquisition in his wards or in his book-room.

When his health made it imperative for him to give up his work, the parting with his hospital duties gave him the sorest pain, and very soon thereafter he confessed that the sight of new medical publications had become almost unbearable seeing that they were no longer to be of practical value to him. Still to the very end his table and even his bed was littered with medical journals, book catalogues, and works of reference, of which he had a marvellous assortment.

During his active life he was an enthusiastic member of the various medical societies of the city and district, where his genial criticism was a distinct feature of the meetings, while his presence was always welcome at the annual dinners.

Dr. Fraser's advice in all matters of difficulty was always at the service of his professional brethren and friends, by whom it was greatly valued, and in this respect as in many others his loss will be severely felt.

#### WILLIAM HENRY FOLKER, F.R.C.S.ENG.,

CONSULTING SURGEON, NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE INFIRMARY.

WE regret to record the death of Mr. W. H. Folker, F.R.C.S.Eng., which took place at his residence, Bedford House, Hanley, Staffs., on March 26th, in his 86th year. The end was not unexpected, as he had lapsed into complete invalidism for the last three years.

Mr. Folker was born at Brighton in 1826, and was educated at New College School, Oxford, under George Valentine Cox, M.A. Subsequently he was apprenticed, as was then necessary, to James Fernandez Clarke, who was then on the staff of the *Lancet*; he became a student at Charing Cross Hospital, where he gained several prizes, including the final silver medal for clinical work. He also studied in Paris under Trousseau, Velpeau, Nélaton, Malgaigne, Ricord, and Dubois.

In 1851 he took the diploma of M.R.C.S.Eng., and in 1853 was elected House-Surgeon to the North Staffordshire Infirmary, which post he resigned three years later in order to begin general practice in Hanley. But his dissociation from the hospital was not of long duration, for in 1858 he was elected to the visiting staff as Honorary Surgeon, and held that office until 1890. From that date until 1892 he undertook the duties of Surgeon to the newly-formed Ophthalmic Department, and then retired as