

Born in 1812 at Easter Drumsheugh House, his father's property, educated at the High School of Edinburgh, and subsequently at an English school, he studied medicine in the Edinburgh University, where in 1835 he took the M.D. degree with a thesis on Hydrocephalus. He then studied at several of the great medical schools, notably that of Paris. On his return to Edinburgh he settled down to practice, in which he continued for half a century.

In 1847 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians. He held various staff appointments in the Royal Infirmary, the Children's Hospital, the New Town Dispensary, etc. At the time of his death he was one of the Consulting Physicians to the New Town Dispensary and to the Royal Hospital for Sick Children.

Of this latter hospital Dr. John Smith and he were in reality the originators about the year 1859. Dr. Weir's special sphere was midwifery and the diseases of children, and his opinion in such cases was much sought after. Throughout his long life he ever kept himself abreast of the advances of medicine, and with his long and rich clinical experience was ready to utilise everything to the good of his patients. His patients were devoted to him; he was their friend, and a most genial and kind one. Shy and unassuming, he spent his life among his patients, and in his study when not on holiday, and appeared little in the world's affairs.

In his younger days he was a great athlete—a good shot, a keen fisher, an enthusiastic bowler and curler, and one of the Royal Archers, the Queen's Body Guard for Scotland.

His wife died some twelve years ago; he leaves no children. Despite his great age he occasionally, till a few months ago, saw some of his old patients, and in some cases acted in consultation with his medical brethren, by all of whom he was greatly respected and will be much missed.

ALFRED THOMAS BRETT, M.D.

By the death of Dr. A. T. Brett, which occurred on July 11th, Watford has lost its leading citizen, and the British Medical Association a notable member. He had been in failing health ever since an attack of influenza some eighteen months ago, but the direct cause of his death was Bright's disease, from which he had suffered since the beginning of the present year.

Dr. Brett was the son of the late Mr. J. T. Brett, of Walton-on-Thames, and was born in 1828; he was therefore 68 years of age at the time of his death. He received his medical education at Guy's Hospital, where he had a distinguished career as a student. He became a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, and a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries in 1850, and took the M.D. degree at the University of St. Andrews in the same year.

Soon after graduation he settled at Watford, where he remained for the rest of his life. He soon acquired an extensive practice, and at one time or another he held all the public appointments which require to be filled by a medical man. He was Medical Officer to the workhouse of Watford parish for forty years, and Medical Officer of Health for twenty-five years; he was also Public Vaccinator and Certifying Factory Surgeon. He was besides Honorary Surgeon to the Cottage Hospital, Consulting Medical Officer of the London Orphan Asylum, and Surgeon to the London and North-Western Railway. But the duties of these appointments, all of which he discharged with the utmost fidelity, were far from absorbing Dr. Brett's energies. He took a prominent part in the municipal life of Watford, and when in the Jubilee year there appeared to be a prospect of the town being endowed with a corporation, public opinion designated him as most likely to be its first mayor. He was a member of the Herts County Council. He also had much to do with the establishment of the Watford Public Library, the endowed schools, and other local institutions. He was a Vice-President of the Medical Officers of Schools Association, in the formation of which he took an active part. He did much to further technical education, especially for women and girls, in the county.

When the volunteer movement was started Dr. Brett threw himself into it with characteristic ardour. He was the third to join the corps formed in Watford in 1859. His commission as Surgeon-Major was dated 1861. After thirty-six

years' service he received the long service medal from the Queen, retiring with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

In local charitable work Dr. Brett was a leading spirit throughout his professional life. He was a genuine philanthropist, who showed his sympathy for the needy and the suffering in the most practical manner, and spared neither time nor trouble in bringing them help.

In everything that concerned the health and wellbeing of the community Dr. Brett took a keen and untiring interest. He was a persevering advocate of sanitation in the largest sense, taking the term to include every possible means of bettering the physical, moral, and social condition of all classes. The amount and value of the work he accomplished in all these directions are almost incalculable. Overwhelmed with work public and private as he was, he always found time for more. He was accustomed to say, "We can never find time for anything; if we want time we must make it." Acting in this spirit he managed to "make" time to be a director of the Corn Exchange and Town Improvement Society, of the Watford Gas and Coke Company, and President of the Watford and West Herts Building Society, besides taking an active part in politics on the Liberal side.

Dr. Brett had a distinct literary gift, of which he gave proof in frequent contributions to the local press. To the literature of his profession he contributed reports on successful Cases of Ovariotomy (1864). He took a keen interest in science, particularly in natural history. He was one of the founders of the Herts Natural History Society, of which he was the second President, Sir John Evans having been the first. To the *Transactions* of this Society Dr. Brett contributed many papers on Poisonous Yew Trees, A Mineral Spring at Watford, Notes on a Cutting at Hamper Mill, etc. He was a very old member of the British Medical Association, and was a regular attendant at its meetings. He was a former District Vice-President for Herts for the Metropolitan Counties Branch. He was one of the oldest Freemasons in his district, and was Worshipful Master of his lodge in 1863, and held the provincial rank of Past Grand Warden.

This brief and inadequate sketch of Dr. Brett's career will serve to show how full his life was, and how well he followed in the footsteps of the Great Exemplar who "passed by doing good." He was a medical practitioner of the best kind, ever making it his aim to heal the spirit as well as the body, and striving to teach all within his sphere of influence how to preserve health and compass happiness. He was a good citizen, doing his duty strenuously and faithfully in all his relations to his fellow men and to the State.

Dr. Brett married Miss Reeves, of Chalk Hill, who died in 1865. He had a son (who died in infancy) and four daughters, of whom three survive him. One of them is the wife of Dr. St. Leger, one of his partners.

THE announcement of the death of Surgeon-Captain JOHN ERNEST TRASK, Army Medical Staff, from cholera, in the Soudan, at the early age of 34, has been received with great regret. He was educated at Bath and at the Bristol Medical School, entering the Army Medical Department in 1887. He was two years at Aldershot, and subsequently served in India for nearly five years. He returned to England in June, 1895, and a few months afterwards took up an appointment he received in the Egyptian Army. Surgeon-Captain Trask was well known and held in great regard at Bath, where he received his education. He was a good sportsman, and held at Poona the captainship of the Gymkhana Cricket Eleven, and was instrumental in instituting the inter-Presidency matches.

WE regret to have to record the death of Dr. J. RITCHIE BROWN, of Saltcoats, which occurred on July 13th. Dr. Brown had a distinguished career at Glasgow University, graduating M.D., with honours in 1853. He was appointed assistant to Dr. Mackenzie, the Waltonian Lecturer on Eye Diseases in Glasgow University, whom he assisted in bringing out the fourth edition of his *Diseases of the Eye*.

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN has graciously promised to contribute the sum of £50 towards the Extension and Improvement Fund of Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital.