

## Obituary.

F. M. CAIRD, M.B., C.M., F.R.C.S.E., LL.D.,

Emeritus Professor of Clinical Surgery, Edinburgh University.

We announced briefly in our last issue the death on November 1st, in Edinburgh, at the age of 73, of Emeritus Professor Francis Mitchell Caird. Although he had had a few signs of cardiac weakness in recent years, his death took place with startling suddenness while he was in full mental and bodily activity. He was born in 1853, and was educated at the High School, and thereafter assisted the late Professor John Hutton Balfour in the Botanical Department of the University, and at a later stage adopted medicine as a career. He graduated M.B., C.M. at Edinburgh in 1877. As Lister had been professor of clinical surgery up to the preceding year, Caird came greatly under his influence, having served both as a dresser and clinical clerk in his wards. This to a great extent determined his career, for, having an ardent love for surgery, he began to devote himself to preparations for work as a surgeon almost immediately after graduation. In the summer session of 1878 he became resident in the surgical wards of Mr. Chiene. In 1879 he took the diploma of L.R.C.S. Edin., and proceeded to the Fellowship in 1880. Caird thus became the living transmitter of the Listerian doctrines and practice in Edinburgh, and these were well summed up in a pamphlet entitled *Hints on the Antiseptic Management of Wounds, "Listerism,"* which he published in 1880.

With the object of gaining a fuller knowledge of pathology and anatomy he went to the University of Strasbourg, where he studied especially under von Recklinghausen and Joessel. On his return to Edinburgh he was demonstrator in anatomy for some three years at Minto House and in Surgeons' Hall under Dr. (later Professor) Cossar Ewart and Mr. C. W. Cathcart. At the same time he was invited by Professor Chiene, who at that time was one of the ordinary surgeons to the Royal Infirmary, to become his private assistant. In this capacity he not only assisted Mr. Chiene in his private surgical practice, but helped him in the teaching of his large surgical class. This position he continued to hold until 1886; when Mr. Chiene was appointed professor of surgery in succession to Professor Spence, in the year 1882, Caird became the University assistant in the chair of surgery. In 1886 Mr. Caird was elected to the post of assistant surgeon to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, and commenced to lecture on his own account in surgery as a recognized extra-mural teacher; for the next twenty years he continued to lecture with success on this subject, attracting large classes of students. He was distinguished for great clearness of exposition as well as forcefulness and brevity of expression, qualities which rendered him highly popular as a teacher. In 1900 he was appointed to full charge of wards in the Royal Infirmary, and here as a clinical teacher his popularity was even greater.

In 1908, following upon the death of Professor Annandale, he was elected to fill the Regius Chair of Clinical Surgery

in the University of Edinburgh, a post which he held till 1919, when he resigned and was succeeded by Sir Harold Stiles. On his retirement from this post he received, in 1920, the honorary degree of LL.D. from the University, and at the same time was elected by the managers of the Royal Infirmary a consulting surgeon to that institution.

At an early stage in his career Professor Caird had been greatly influenced by the work of some of the Continental surgeons, particularly of Professor Mikulicz of Breslau, and almost every summer he paid a visit to one or more of the great Continental medical schools, especially in Germany, where he came into personal contact with some of the eminent men by whom surgical science was being advanced. In this way he was one of the first to practise various operations in Scotland. Following his original master, Lister, he was an early upholder of the systematic use of rigorous aseptic methods. The early introduction of

local and spinal anaesthesia in major operations at Edinburgh was also largely due to him. While still an assistant surgeon to the Royal Infirmary he had been greatly impressed by the advances taking place in German hospitals in regard to abdominal surgery. Billroth in Vienna had been the first, in 1881, to remove the pylorus successfully for cancer of the stomach, and during the years 1878 to 1883 had been a pioneer in performing a large number of intestinal resections and enterorrhaphies. Influenced by this work, Caird was performing gastric and intestinal operations at an earlier date and on a larger scale than any of his colleagues in Edinburgh. The results of this work were presented in various papers, published mainly in the *Scottish Medical and Surgical Journal*; among the subjects were operation for stricture of the large intestine (1901), enterectomy for tuberculous stricture of the intestine (1904), and operation for perforated gastric ulcer (1905). In 1906 he published in the *Medico-Chirurgical Society's Transactions* a series of cases of operation

for perforated gastric and duodenal ulcer. He was also one of the earliest and most successful operators in the domain of excision of the rectum for carcinoma, and published a paper on the subject in 1903; his outstanding position in this department of surgery was recognized by his being invited in 1913 to deliver on it the William Banks Memorial Lecture at the University of Liverpool. Still another department of operative surgery in which he was a pioneer was excision of the tongue for cancer, and in 1911 he published a record of his work in the *Medico-Chirurgical Society's Transactions*.

Although Caird was recognized as possessing special ability and special interest in the domain of surgery of the alimentary tract, his opinion and his skill were no less valued by his colleagues in general surgery. In regard to the surgery of the limbs, he had published a valuable monograph on *The Shoulder Joint in Relation to Certain Dislocations and Fractures* as early as 1886. Professor Caird was joint author with Mr. C. W. Cathcart of *A Student's Atlas of Bones and Ligaments* and *A Surgical Handbook*, both of which have enjoyed a great measure of success. The latter especially found much favour with students, and has been the constant companion in practice of many general practitioners.



Photograph by]

[A. Swan Watson, Edinburgh.

PROFESSOR F. M. CAIRD.

In 1901 Professor Caird received the Victoria Liston Jubilee Prize from the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh "for the greatest benefit done to practical surgery by any Fellow or Licentiate of the College during the quadrennial period ending June 20th, 1901." In 1906 he delivered the annual address on surgery to the Canadian Medical Association at its meeting in Halifax. During the great war he acted as one of the consulting surgeons to the British Expeditionary Force in France, having the rank of colonel in the Army Medical Service and being attached to the Third Army. At the last meeting of the British Medical Association in Edinburgh he was joint secretary to the Surgical Section. His interest in the Association did not diminish, and in 1915-16 he was president of the Edinburgh Branch. He was secretary of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Edinburgh for a considerable time, and at a later date occupied the presidential chair of this society; those who attended can remember the skill with which he conducted its meetings, and the admirably brief and lucid manner in which he was wont at the close of a discussion to sum up the points of interest and importance contributed by various speakers.

To the end of his life Professor Caird preserved the quiet, alert, and kindly manner which had characterized him in his relations with many generations of pupils. He was a man of tender sympathy, and had in a high degree the ability of inspiring confidence and affection among his patients. His energy and the amount of daily work he could accomplish were extraordinary. By his students he was held both in reverence and in affectionate regard, and no one ever accompanied him on a ward visit without picking up some important principle of diagnosis or prognosis or receiving some useful hints in regard to treatment. He maintained a voluminous correspondence both with foreign colleagues and with former pupils, and in this his width of interest and his memory were admirable.

Professor Caird had a great gift for delineation. This had been acquired in his early years in connexion with making sketches of plants. He had great facility with the pencil, and added to the value of his notes in surgical cases by making water-colour sketches; he has left a valuable collection of drawings and paintings illustrating cases and operations. His services in this respect were in great demand by his colleagues when some commemorative drawing or menu card for a medical dinner was required, and many ingenious and amusing drawings by him are preserved. Even the walls of his smoking-room in the house which he occupied for many years in Charlotte Square had been decorated by his hand with beautiful and vivid frescoes of scenes from ancient Egyptian life. At medical dinners and social gatherings in Edinburgh he was also a welcome guest; his talent for making amusing observations and his gift of song were in constant request.

The funeral took place at the Dean Cemetery on November 4th, and was attended by a large number of representatives from various medical bodies in the city. The pall-bearers included three sons—Dr. Karl Caird, Dr. Colin Caird, and Mr. Francis Caird. Among those present was Sir Robert Philip, President-Elect of the British Medical Association, Professor Russell, Mr. Alexander Miles, Mr. C. W. Cathcart, and Mr. Henry Wade. Professor Caird is survived by a widow, three sons, and two daughters.

The following appreciation has been received from Mr. C. W. Cathcart, C.B.E., F.R.C.S., consulting surgeon to the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh:

It is with much diffidence that I respond to the request to add a few personal notes to the obituary record of my life-long friend, Francis M. Caird. He and I first met in the class of practical botany under Professor John Hutton Balfour in the seventies of last century. He was a demonstrator and I a student. In my efforts to cut sections of wood and leaves with a razor for the microscope, he helped me so kindly and successfully that I looked to him and to no other when any difficulties arose. Moreover, in our Saturday excursions for field botany he knew the names—popular and scientific—of all the wild flowers, and could tell us generally some interesting points about them. Before long other students besides myself used to

gather from him all the information we required. At that stage his ability, courtesy, and gift for teaching became well recognized in the botany class. Soon he and I became fast friends, and we remained so to the end, when the sudden cardiac failure last week carried him to the grave. The impression he made on his friends was that of a man of great energy and outstanding ability. In addition to his purely professional studies he read widely in history and general literature, and when such subjects were raised in conversation could emphasize his points by illustrations from his well stored memory. His ready wit and sense of humour added a spice both to his teaching and general conversation. Caird as a dresser and clerk in Professor Lister's wards was one of the many enthusiastic followers of his chief. It was an important part of his training while a student to come under the spell of a man who was as great in his devotion to the poorest patient as he was penetrating in scientific research. Looking back on Caird's career, one can see that he was always on the look-out for new ideas. He assisted the late Dr. Berry Hart in making the first frozen sections to illustrate human anatomy that were undertaken in Edinburgh. As operating assistant to Dr. Angus Macdonald, who practised gynaecological surgery after Keith went to London, Caird developed much skill in this department of abdominal surgery. From this he went on to the surgery of the intestinal canal, and became one of the pioneers in Scotland in this line of work.

Others, no doubt, will refer to Caird's success as a teacher when he attained full rank in the Infirmary and University. Those who knew him in his younger days recognized that this was only the fulfilment of his early promise.

MR. HENRY WADE, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.D., F.R.C.S., surgeon to the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, writes:

Mr. Caird was undoubtedly a magnificent teacher, and for these qualities all his students owed him a profound debt of gratitude. At the same time, he won from all, in addition to an admiration for his genius, a deep and abiding love for him as a man—an unsought tribute earned by him unconsciously. Who could resist his fascination? He seemed to tell you daily what a fortunate man you were to have chosen so splendid a profession; what a joy it was to render such services to humanity; how happy you must be to be so trusted, and how hard you must work to merit truly such a trust. He seemed to tell you that some day even you would get your commission as an ensign and be allowed to carry the colours, and that he knew he could trust you to guard the honour of the regiment of surgery in the fight that never ceased. In the operating theatre he was never spectacular. He seldom spoke to his assistants or students. All his conduct told you that you were there as a privileged spectator. The interest of the patient then alone was considered, however grave the operation, or however trivial the service to be rendered. Mr. Caird's standard of surgical honour was equalled by his surgical courage. Especially as the pioneer of abdominal surgery in the Edinburgh Medical School he frequently accomplished what was looked on as a surgical miracle, and these patients never forget their saviour. Although the calls of surgery were ever so insistent and ever met, Mr. Caird never failed to find time for other interests. The secret of how this was achieved was revealed to those privileged to assist him in his private practice. The tedium of the long train journey to a consultation was lessened by a volume of his favourite Carlyle's *Frederick the Great*, or the most recent work on Egyptology or botany. To go with him on a holiday during the summer vacation was a joy given to some of us. In everything Mr. Caird was generous to an extreme degree; many suspected, but only those intimately associated with him in his private work knew, the extent of this. The honour of the service rendered was often insisted on as in itself a sufficient reward. To the wounded officer who had insisted on being treated as a private patient and who wished to recompense him, he said, "I have operated on you; you have fought for me, and I am still your debtor." Mr. Caird died as he had lived, quietly and happily. The cup that was at his lips he carefully replaced; his head sank forward, and he passed peacefully to his maker.