

## Sir Thomas Clifford Allbutt, K.C.B., F.R.S.

In the death of the Rt. Hon. Sir T. Clifford Allbutt, K.C.B., M.D., LL.D., D.SC., F.R.C.P., F.R.S., Regius Professor of Physic in the University of Cambridge, at Cambridge on February, 22, 1925, British medicine has lost a very outstanding figure, and one of the few remaining physicians of the older school who combined practice and science with literary scholarship. His twenty-two years as a hospital physician in Leeds were years of great activity in practice and increasing success. During this time his contributions to medical science were by no means small. To Sir Clifford Allbutt the whole profession of medicine is indebted for the perfection of our present handy clinical thermometer. His book on "The Use of the Ophthalmoscope in Diseases of the Nervous System and of the Kidneys and Also in Certain Other General Disorders" was one of the pioneer efforts in establishing the use of this instrument in medical practice. His work on the effect of overexertion upon the heart was again a pioneer effort, though its conclusions have been subject to some modification with increasing knowledge of cardiology. To morbid anatomy Allbutt contributed the first description, in 1868, of syphilitic disease of the cerebral arteries, and was the first in the British Isles to describe a case of tabetic atrophy of the joints. To his scholarship and literary ability we owe several works, notably, "Science and Medieval Thought" (1901); "The Historical Relations of Medicine and Surgery" (1905); "A Series of Lectures Delivered in America;" and "Greek Medicine in Rome" (1921). Only a scholar could have coordinated in many writers such a uniformity both of scientific excellence and literary attainment as we have in his "System of Medicine" which he edited and in which for the later edition Sir Humphrey Rolleston was associated with him. As one of his minor but important works the little volume on "The Composition of Scientific Papers," which reached its third edition in 1923, should find a place on the shelves of all budding writers, especially medical writers for whom it was primarily written.



Solid as are his contributions to contemporary thought, he will be remembered and regretted for those qualities of heart and personality that endeared him to his fellows of all ages. He was tall, upright and stately in carriage, courteous and genial in address, a cultured and finished public speaker; yet he could be approached by the most junior student without any fear, and though trenchant in criticizing faulty work, he was never head to utter ill of any he knew.

His father was the Rev. Thomas Allbutt, at one time Vicar of Dewsbury in Yorkshire, where Sir Clifford was born. His mother was Marianne, daughter of John Wooler of Dewsbury. He was educated at St. Peter's School, York, and Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, where he was elected a Fellow on his return to Cambridge as Regius Professor of Physic in 1892. He married in 1869 Susan, daughter of Thomas England of Headingly. There were no children. To Lady Allbutt we offer our heartfelt sympathy in the loss of a great physician, a great gentleman and a great friend.

A. G. GIBSON.

Oxford.

*Note.*—The final revision of the page-proof of the late Sir Clifford Allbutt's charming Proem to the Sir William Osler Memorial Volume (Bulletin ix), was forwarded to us addressed in his own handwriting only a few days before his death, so that this tribute to the memory of his dear friend and colleague was one of the last literary activities of this great physician, writer and scholar. He was the most distinguished figure in British Medicine at the time of his death, and shared with Osler a remarkable community of interests and influence. Both were eminent teachers and students of medicine, bringing great distinction to their respective Universities; both were writers of unusual, though differing, charm of style; both mingled the scholar's culture, humanism and reverence for the past, with the keenest interest in the present and vision for the future; both had a genius for friendship and the passing of both is mourned throughout the English-speaking world.

EDITORS.