

MESSAGE OF SYMPATHY TO LADY STIRLING.

At the conclusion of his remarks, printed above, Dr. J. C. Verco moved that a message of sympathy be sent by the South Australian Branch of the British Medical Association to Lady Stirling.

Dr. W. T. Hayward considered it a privilege to be allowed to second the motion. As a colleague of Sir Edward Stirling for nearly forty years, he could endorse all that the President had so succinctly and sympathetically said. It was well that the work of Sir Edward Stirling should have been so fully recapitulated. Probably the junior members of the Branch regarded him as the Professor of Physiology and an eminent scientist, forgetful of the fact that for many years he was a distinguished surgeon. The older members would be reminded of the time when he was a tower of strength to the Branch. Rarely did he miss a meeting, and on all surgical subjects and matters in regard to polity of the profession his voice was always heard. Endowed with a fine presence, a sonorous voice, a poignant humour and an unrivalled vocabulary, Sir Edward was a most forceful speaker. Two occasions stood out prominently in his (the speaker's) memory. The first was in 1889, at the Intercolonial Congress at Melbourne, during what was probably the finest debate of any of the congresses, when he forcibly expounded the views of what was termed the Adelaide school of the treatment of hydatids. The second was at the time of the unhappy hospital trouble, some twenty years ago, when, at a meeting convened by the citizens of Adelaide to express sympathy with and confidence in the old hospital medical staff, he was unexpectedly called upon for a speech. He roused the audience to a pitch of enthusiasm by his scathing invective and happy phraseology. Sir Edward Stirling was a great personality; his memory would always live in the hearts of those who had privilege to call him friend.

Dr. B. M. Poulton, in speaking to the motion, said that he had had the privilege of being Sir Edward's house surgeon for two years in the early 'eighties and that he had very pleasant recollections of the association. Dr. Stirling was a very stimulating and instructive "honorary" to work under; and then, as in later years, he gave much pleasure to his old house surgeon in country hospitality and shooting trips. In the hospital and outside his quiet, helpful solicitude for people in troubled circumstances and his many benefactions were well known to him and excited his admiration.

In addition to his original and progressive scientific labours, so ably sketched by the President, Professor Stirling exercised a powerful influence for good in the local medical world, for he had clean, clear-cut convictions and his ideals were lofty and worthy of the best traditions of Cambridge and St. George's. He had done much to mould the medical conscience of South Australia. His influence had been most beneficial and would live after him. He would always be remembered for his great qualities, his intrinsic worth and his many kindnesses and hospitalities and, as long as the University of Adelaide existed, as the founder of its Medical School.

Dr. R. Humphrey Marten thought that he had known the late Sir Edward Stirling longer and more intimately than any other member present. He first became acquainted with him in 1881, when Stirling was Assistant Surgeon to St. George's Hospital, London. He used to help the late Mr. Timothy Holmes, and St. George's was known in those days as the "play-house for moneyed surgeons," as most of the staff were rich men and quite independent of their profession. In those days Stirling had, as he always had, a striking personality, light curly hair and blue eyes and always seemed to be on the best of terms with all the other members of the staff.

The next occasion when he met Sir Edward was at Cambridge in 1884. He was home from Australia, obtaining material for starting the physiology classes in the University of Adelaide. He frequently stayed the week-end with the late Sir George Humphry and used to accompany him round the wards of Addenbrooke's Hospital on Sunday mornings.

Stirling was one of a coterie of men whom Michael Foster gathered round him when he came to Cambridge from London. They were a brilliant set; amongst them was J. N. Langley, now Professor of Physiology at Cambridge, Sheridan Lea, Balfour, Gaskell, Haddon and many others who had risen to world-wide fame.

Stirling always used to speak in the most glowing terms of his old Cambridge teachers, Sir George Humphry in anatomy, Sir Michael Foster in physiology and Professor Newton in comparative anatomy, after whom he named an extinct bird he found at Lake Callabonna, the *Genyornis newtoni*.

In 1887 Sir George Humphry gave Dr. Marten a letter from Stirling, which he still had in his possession, asking him to come out and take over a practice in Adelaide. He did this and had remained on the best of terms with him ever since. He claimed that he saw more of his private life than any other member of the profession.

Stirling was a most devoted husband, the kindest of fathers, and when his son was killed many years ago it was a very long time before he recovered from the blow. He was an excellent story-teller and an indefatigable host, and nothing gave him greater pleasure than to show people round his wonderful garden. It often fell to Dr. Marten's lot to go with him for long week-ends to his sheep-station, or on expeditions to collect aboriginal remains; only last year he had travelled 500 miles by motor-car to see about obtaining the skeleton of a stranded whale for the Adelaide Museum. He had done a great deal of travelling about Australia and New Zealand and, among his other accomplishments, he was a perfect bushman. He would easily adjust himself to any uncomfortable surroundings. He never travelled on any trip, in any weather, without seeing that his "Colonel Cochranes" were full of good drinking-water. Sir Edward was a thorough sportsman, an excellent shot, a good fisherman, but he abhorred racing. In his younger days he had been a good alpine climber and even in his later years would always get to the top of a mountain first.

On their trips he was always able to give the correct name of any tree or shrub and every animal and bird. Only once had he found him at a loss. They were superintending the cutting up a whale when a very large, dark-plumaged bird was seen swimming round the carcass, but it turned out to be a visitor from the Antarctic which had followed the whale in shore.

Stirling had suffered for fifty years from duodenal trouble and underwent an operation some ten years ago by Sir Alexander MacCormick. His last illness, which was a sequel of influenza, was probably complicated by his old bowel trouble. Over twenty years ago he had a perforation of his duodenum, before the time of abdominal section for "acute abdomen," but he made a good recovery, although evidences of its former existence were found at the exploratory operation.

The motion was carried in silence, all members standing.

THE SYNTHETIC DRUGS.

The second edition¹ of the book dealing with the chemistry of synthetic drugs, written by Dr. Percy May, has a special interest as a consequence of the war with the Central European Powers. For the two decades preceding 1914 the production of these organic preparations was confined practically to Germany. Since the outbreak of hostilities British chemists have achieved a gratifying success in the manufacture of the substances on a large scale. Many problems of difficulty still await a satisfactory solution, but sufficient progress has been made to give assurance of an ultimate mastery over the technical details of the application of chemical processes evolved in the laboratory to heavy weights of materials. It remains for the medical practitioner to assist the British manufacturing chemists by prescribing drugs of British origin and by placing before the organic chemist the necessary information which will enable him to prepare new desirable substances.

This manual contains not only a description of the chemical nature and the mode of formation of the various organic bodies used in a pure state in medicine, but also an account of the reactions between the synthetic drugs and the fluids and tissues of the living animal organism, wherever these interactions can be traced. Further, much attention is paid

¹ The Chemistry of Synthetic Drugs, by Percy May, D.Sc. (Lond.), F.I.C.; Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged; 1918. London: Longmans, Green & Co.; Demy 8vo., pp. 250. Price, 10s. 6d. net.