

which had reached the alarming figure of 75 per cent. When the scheme for the hospital had matured it was made a condition of the appointments that the honorary surgeon should possess the qualification of F.R.C.S. This requirement would have excluded Mr. Tait, but with characteristic determination he presented himself for examination and received the required fellowship. The hospital was duly opened, and was so conducted by him and his colleagues—Dr. Savage and others—that there was an immediate and even a surprising diminution in the mortality of the patients.

Mr. Tait, as an operator, possessed a steadiness and deftness of hand which was really marvellous, and which was equalled only by the courage with which he undertook operations which up to his time had been regarded as so risky as scarcely to warrant their performance. The quickness and exactness of his work were accompanied by no symptoms of haste or nervous tension. He was seen at his best in a difficult case, where his self-reliance and prompt resourcefulness in dealing with mechanical difficulties were triumphantly displayed.

Mr. Tait was a man of advanced and liberal views and in addition to his own chosen calling took a lively interest in the political and municipal affairs of Birmingham. He was a member of the Town Council for some years, and unsuccessfully contested the Bordesley Division for a seat in Parliament in behalf of the Gladstonian cause and Home Rule. The evolution hypothesis had a great fascination for his mind and prompted some of his contributions to general literature, and he was one of those who assisted in the establishment of a memorial to Darwin in his native town of Shrewsbury. Sir Henry Irving was also among those whose intimacy he enjoyed and no "first night" at the Lyceum was complete without him. Perhaps what created the greatest surprise among the members of the medical profession was his uncompromising opposition to vivisection, but it is generally conceded that his objection to the practice was honest and deep-rooted in his nature. He was personally a great lover of animals, of which he kept a large number, and he had a horror of inflicting what seemed to him unnecessary pain on helpless animals. In connection with his sudden death—the cause of which was chronic Bright's disease—there is one remarkable and