

THE LATE MR. LAWSON TAIT.

WHILE travelling in a Great Western Railway carriage from London to Birmingham on June 15th, I was startled at reading in a morning paper the announcement of the sudden collapse and death of Lawson Tait at Llandudno in Wales. Now for the first time it became known that he had not enjoyed good health for some years, but no hint of any such thing had previously appeared in any of the public prints or medical journals, and accordingly the profession was in no way prepared to meet the sudden announcement of his death. The unexpected announcement was to me a source of double regret, for at that very time I was making my way to Birmingham with the hope of seeing the eminent and world-wide known gynaecologist, and perhaps have some opportunities for witnessing his splendid methods of work.

By his death the science of surgery undoubtedly has sustained a great loss, but he was chiefly known throughout the world for his prowess in obstetric surgery, and his name in the profession will rank with that of Hunter, Simpson, and other famous men.

In his earlier years, after graduation, he received instruction at the hands of Alex. McKenzie Edwards, a clever young operating surgeon, while he also enjoyed the privilege of sitting at the feet of that brilliant master of medicine and the discoverer of chloroform, Sir James Y. Simpson.

It is interesting to note that he came prominently into public life in Birmingham through his undertaking a lectureship on physiology to a ladies' afternoon class. This class proved to be a conspicuous success, and was the means of introducing him to the ladies of many of the leading families in Birmingham, with whom he became exceedingly popular.

About this time a proposal was made for the establishment in Birmingham of a hospital specially devoted to the diseases of women. The project met with very strong opposition from many of the medical men, but the promoters of the new hospital found a strong argument in behalf of their scheme in the excessive mortality which then attended abdominal operations, and