

Obituary

ERNEST HART.

With Ernest Hart there has passed away one of the most uncommon characters in our profession during this century, a strong man whose influence has been felt throughout the whole English-speaking world. I say this advisedly. It was not merely our profession that felt his influence, but the general public, and that not merely in the old country, but in the British colonies and the United States. To the public, it is true, his name may not have been known—indeed, as has recently been pointed out—only a single New York daily paper troubled to give any notice concerning him when the news of his death was cabled to this side. But he it was who made the *British Medical Journal* an influence in moulding public opinion and directing legislation, and making it his duty to call attention more especially to matters of public health, and to direct aright the opinions of the profession and so of the populace, his opinions upon these matters were echoed everywhere. Through his exertions it was that the *British Medical Journal*, from being inconsiderable and unauthoritative, became the most widely read and most important organ of any profession throughout the civilized world. How he achieved this it was my good fortune to learn during the last summer from his own lips. It seems a simple means, but only a man of persuasive influence could have brought it around. Briefly, when any matter of professional or public interest came to the fore he obtained the expression of the recognized leading authority in that subject in an unsigned leading article. I should exceed my privileges were I to recount the names given to me by Mr. Hart—name after name of men of European reputation in their several departments who thus formed the subsidiary staff of the *Journal*, men who were glad to sink their personalities while enforcing their views. What other medical editor has ever collected around him such a staff as that he named to me. To these with a happy instinct he added the coming men among the younger workers.

With this power of gaining the aid of the strongest men and best writers he combined a remarkable business capacity. Only a man endowed with such could have directed the *Journal*. Herein, it is true, lay his weakness as well as his strength. The ideal always