

willingness to undertake a case with little promise of interest. "Oh, go to Dr. So-and-so," he would say, when pressed to treat such a patient.

#### EARLY LIFE.

Christian Albert Theodor Billroth was born April 26th, 1829, at Bergen, on the island of Rügen. His father was a Lutheran minister, and from his earliest youth both parents' efforts were directed towards guiding his steps into a professional career. His own inclinations, perhaps, would have led him to enter upon a life devoted to music, for which he showed very early a passionate fondness, but the remote possibility of the stage was enough to excite the pastor's family to violent opposition, and in 1848 he began his studies at the University of Greifswald. From there he went first to Göttingen and afterward to Berlin where he received his degree of M.D. in 1852, on a thesis describing a pulmonary affection resulting from section of the vagus nerve. He decided to complete and round out his education by visits to other centres, and accordingly we find him journeying to Vienna and Paris. Shortly after he returned to Berlin, and became the assistant of Von Laugendbeck, the greatest German surgeon of his time.

Billroth began to fit himself for teaching, and in 1856 his labours were rewarded by the position of *privat-docent* in the university. Other opportunities presented themselves, notably at Zurich, where he was installed as full professor and chief of clinic. There he remained until 1867, since when he has occupied a similar position in the famous Vienna University. His life in the Austrian capital was not unbroken, for the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war recalled him to the Fatherland to assume charge of the military hospitals on the Rhine, at Weissenburg and Mannheim. After

the siege of Paris and the close of the struggle he lost no time in returning to his chair at Vienna, where he continued until his death. His health had not been good for eight or nine years past, since an alarming attack of pneumonia, and he went to Abbazia, a well-known Austrian winter resort, to recruit his failing powers, where he died suddenly and peacefully on February 6th, of debility due to heart trouble.

#### IN HIS VIENNA HOME.

A wife and three daughters, of whom only the second is married, survive him. The eldest daughter was the favourite, their friends often remarking that the relation between them seemed more that of brother and sister than parent and child. They kept open house, entertained lavishly and made their home a salon where all the musical celebrities of Vienna, notably Brahms, Henschel and Saint-Saëns, were accustomed to assemble. Billroth himself was an excellent pianist, though he seldom appeared as a performer. Still he was a charming host and an attentive listener, and the concerts he gave attracted the best artists in the city. Brahms and the doctor were fast friends, the composer often treating his friends to a first performance of his compositions in his house. This style of entertainment and the expensive mode of living prevented any appreciable saving, so that when his illness awoke Dr. Billroth to a realizing sense of the possibility of his own death and the financial straits in which his family would be left, he determined on retrenchment and moved immediately into a flat, giving up his home and extravagance in living. Although so famous and so widely consulted, his practice was not large, owing to the peculiarities we have mentioned, and it is unlikely the change was made in time to permit him to accumulate even a competency.—*Review of Reviews.*