

JOHN R. DICKSON, M.D.

JOHN ROBINSON DICKSON was born in Dungannon, Co. Tyrone, Ireland, in 1819. His friends designed him for the bar, but his own will prevailed and he prosecuted his medical studies in Belfast and Glasgow. In 1837 he came to Canada and settled in Peterborough, where he had a laborious practice in connection with the late Dr. Hutchinson. Finding the fatigue of visiting over such a scattered and new country too trying for him he left there and settled in Kingston in 1842, and here his steady habits, perseverance and skill soon became known. Surgery was, perhaps, his forte. "He was constitutionally fitted for it, though always first he was never in a hurry, he was calm, decided, expeditious and thorough. I have been present at operations by the most skilful surgeons of our time, and I have seen none that had the real requisites for a successful surgeon more fully than Dr. Dickson." This is the testimony of the late Dr. Mair, and as Dr. Dickson has now retired from all active duties it renders this encomium not out of place. In 1854 he was amongst the the most active in forming the Medical School in Kingston, and at its first regular meeting he was unanimously chosen Professor of Surgery. This School became the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, for which, in 1866 he obtained the charter, and of which he has the honour of having been and continuing to be its first President.

In 1860, being on a tour for health, he visited the various colleges in London and succeeded in obtaining recognition for the degrees of Queen's and the Royal, for nothing ever made him lose sight of the future interests of his college. In 1862 he was appointed surgeon to the Prov. Penitentiary. Being always a lover of temperance and never losing an opportunity to inculcate its precepts on the students, he here saw more than ever the necessity for its practice and drew many a moral lesson for them from the distinctive forms of intemperance met with in his daily visits among the convicts.

At the first meeting of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario he was elected its President. In 1869 he received the appointment of Medical Superintendent of the Kingston Asylum for Insane. Always

determined to master each new subject of thought as it came up before him, he now devoted himself to the study of mental diseases, works on Hygiene, Ventilation, &c. He abolished alcohol and beer from the institution and substituted coffee and other drinks. This was a daring first step in its management, but health, he thought, demanded it and he has now the pleasure of knowing that since his report before the Parliamentary Committee in Toronto on the subject more than one or two asylums are now trying the same principle. The most of his large collection of anatomical casts he has presented to the College. He never ceased to be a student while health remained, and often found himself subscribing for more medical literature than he could profit by.

For many years now the Dr. has resigned the active work in his profession, and last year, though in opposition of friends of the institution, he, for the sake of his health, gave up his position of Medical Superintendent of Kingston Asylum. Since then his health which had slightly failed, has greatly improved, and now his many old students will gladly hear that he has apparently many years of usefulness before him.

The following is copied from the Medical Registry of 1871:—M.D., New York, 1842; M. R. C. P., London, 1863; F. R. C. S., Edin., 1867; M. R. C. S., Eng., 1863; Vice-President Canadian Medical Association; Member of the Association of Superintendents of Hospitals for Insane, North America; Prof. of Clinical Surgery; Ex-President of General Council of Medical

Education and Registration, Upper Canada; late (16 years) Surgeon of Kingston General Hospital; Author of "Prison Reports," "Asylum Reports"; contributor of "Removal of the Inferior Maxilla," B. A. Medical Journal, 1861; "Vaginal Hysterotomy," Ibid, 1861; "Re-section of Elbow Joint," Ibid, 1861.

We have on our table a pamphlet descriptive of Manitoba and the great North-west, which we presume was sent us by some land agent who takes the JOURNAL, and read in it our advice to the Freshies. A map of this great country, which accompanies it, may be seen at our sanctum at any time.

