

### SIR WILLIAM ROBERTS.

There are many physicians who have made for themselves a greater name and popular reputation than Sir William Roberts, but there have been few brighter spirits, few who by their life work have done so much to advance the credit of English medical research, very few in whom race, training and natural ability combined to produce so interesting and refreshing a personality.

For, in the first place, he was of Welsh Wales, and of the most intensely Welsh part of Wales, to wit, of Anglesea, where Cymric is still the universal medium of communication between all classes, so much so that the unfortunate "Sassenach," if he strays beyond Holyhead or Bangor, finds himself as much an Angle at sea as is the island itself. And throughout life Roberts bore himself as a Welshman of the best type. He was one of the small-built, black-haired Welshmen, alert and genial, with that accent and intonation of the English language that bewrayeth, and that simple humour which, as Shakespeare taught us by the mouth of Fluellen, is very far from denoting the simpleton. Not that Sir William would compel his antagonist to eat the leek: indeed, in this he departed from type. He was neither fiery nor litigious; on the contrary, was of so gentle a nature as to be peculiarly averse to picking a quarrel or hurting the feelings of any living man, present or absent. Yet, if one, listening to his ordinary social talk, were inclined to judge that talk childish in its playfulness, he would be brought up sharp against some shrewd sally or rejoinder, so full of knowledge and so rich in thought that of a sudden one's estimation of the man underwent an entire change.

*training*

His learning, further, was somewhat distinctive. The ordinary public school of his boyhood was strictly orthodox and under the sway of the Church of England. Thus, as the son of well-to-do Welsh, and therefore Calvinistic, parents, he was sent to Mill Hill in Hertfordshire, then recently established by the Congregationalists upon an undenominational basis, and thence, for his medical studies, he passed naturally to University College, which yet more fully represented the attempt to remove education from the domination of any one sect. The very liberalism which led to the foundation of these two institutions led, especially in the early years of their existence, to a nascent keenness in the spirit and methods of their teaching staffs, and of this young Roberts reaped the full benefit. It is not a little instructive to note how many of the leading English physicians and surgeons of the close of this century have been old University College men, pupils of Sharpey, Quain, Walshe, Jenner, and Erichsen.