

also appointed by the Government to be one of the Crown members of the General Medical Council then recently established. From that date he has been reappointed again and again, and in 1891, upon the death of Mr. John Marshall, he was elected president—perhaps the most influential position obtainable by any English practitioner. At the College of Physicians also he was one of the most influential of the Fellows, and, on the retirement of Sir William Jenner, it was a very close contest between himself and Sir Andrew Clark. Had he not been at the time President of the General Medical Council, he would probably have been elected to this high honor also.

In all his public work in the profession he brought to bear a thorough mastery of procedure and an unflagging attention to detail. He was, for instance, chairman of the Pharmacopœia Committee of the Medical Council and attended assiduously all the meetings in connection with the preparation of the first two issues and of the successive addenda, though during the last twelve months he was suffering from cancer of the rectum and indeed had undergone operation for this. Only once did he allow his failing health to interfere with his attendance at the meetings of the Committee. And in June last, although he had not wholly recovered from the operation in question, he, an old man of 81, presided day after day at the meetings of the General Medical Council. It was the good fortune of the writer to be present at the conclusion of this meeting and to hear Sir William Turner's very touching speech of appreciation. "It is not customary," said Sir W. Turner, "for the Council to award a vote of thanks to its President at the conclusion of its meetings, but we cannot regard this as an ordinary occasion. There is a quality which we are apt to regard as specially characteristic of our race—the quality known by the short but expressive term of 'pluck'—this quality has been displayed by the President in no ordinary way." In acknowledging these thanks Sir Richard made his farewell speech to the Council and to the profession. Affected to tears, he said that what had moved him at all times in his work was the sense of duty. When he had to lay down his office it would be with every wish for the welfare of the Council and of its members.

But such steady and unremitting public work for the good of the profession is, it must be confessed with perhaps a little sadness, of ephemeral value. Such work, while appreciated at the time, is little valued by succeeding generations, greatly as those generations benefit from public work well performed. And is it not a little sad also to think that Sir Richard Quain's greatest medical work, namely, the editing of the great Dictionary of Medicine, will not wholly assure his