PHINEAS SIMON ABRAHAM.

PHINEAS SIMON ABRAHAM was born at Falmouth, Jamaica, in 1846, and was the son of the late Phineas Abraham, J.P., formerly of that island. He was educated at University College School, London, and later at University College, taking the degree of B.Sc.Lond., with the original intention of becoming a chemical and mining engineer. He attended also the Royal College of Science, Dublin, where he was a Royal Exhibitioner.

Entering Trinity College in that city he was First Senior Moderator in 1871, Gold Medallist in Natural Science, and obtained the M.A. at the University.

He entered St. Bartholomew's Hospital Medical School with a Science Exhibition and Scholarship in 1876, and obtained the Diploma F.R.C.S.I. in 1880, having in the previous year been appointed Curator of the Museums of the Royal College of Surgeons, Dublin, and subsequently a Member of the Court of Examiners. He also studied for some months at the École de Médecine, Paris, and Clausthal, Germany.

On graduating in medicine, M.D., T.C.D., in 1886, he obtained the Lectureship in Physiology and Histology at the Westminster Hospital Medical School, which he held for five years.

It was about this time that he developed an interest in dermatology, and became a Clinical Assistant at the Hospital for Diseases of the Skin, Blackfriars, eventually being elected Surgeon to the Institution. In 1889 he was selected as Medical Secretary to the National Leprosy Fund, and represented this country at the International Lepra Conference in Berlin, 1897, editing the *Journal of the Leprosy Investigation Committee* and contributing an article thereon to Hillis's *Leprosy in British Guiana*. He also published contributions to Allbutt's *System of Medicine* and to a *System of Syphilis*, and edited *Unna's Dermatological Writings*, published by the New Sydenham Society in 1893.

Abraham was one of the original founders of the Royal Academy of Medicine of Ireland, and took an active part also in founding the Dermatological Society of Great Britain and Ireland in 1894, becoming Vice-President in 1901. This Society eventually amalgamated with

the Dermatological Society of London, founded in 1882, and was incorporated with the Royal Society of Medicine, constituting the Section of Dermatology.

In 1892 Abraham was elected Dermatologist to the West London Hospital, an appointment he held for many years. He was President of the West London Medico-Chirurgical Society in 1910-11, and during his term of office founded and endowed the Triennial Gold Medal awarded by that Society for distinguished services, or for exceptional heroism in the discharge of medical duties. Previous to this he had been President of the Irish Medical Schools' and Graduates' Association, and in 1910 presided over the Dermatological Section of the British Medical Association's Annual Meeting in London.

Abraham was a popular member of the Savage Club and a prominent Freemason, the founder of more than one lodge, and finally an officer of the Grand Lodge of England.

This enumeration will suffice to convey the chief activities of one whose life and energies were largely spent in organisation and progress. He was proud of his profession and of his own work for it and in it.

Abraham possessed the quality of originality, but with it he continued many of the older methods of treatment in hospital and private practice, which he was satisfied were of practical value, in spite of the occasional criticisms of his dermatological colleagues. He was a successful clinician, the result largely of attention to details, and spared no pains in dealing with cases which, although of limited pathological importance, required persistent personal application and help.

Abraham was an enthusiast, as his record shows, holding an honourable place among his contemporaries and loyal to his convictions, but when his opposition was aroused, even to vehemence, no lasting personal feeling or resentment was allowed to remain, and soon the old spirit of friendliness returned—perhaps to a larger degree.

His geniality, always a leading characteristic, but especially towards young men, was a trait which all who knew him recognised. He had none of the lofty indifference with which the middle-aged man often regards the younger generation, but was always anxious to learn from and assist them. This was notably the case wherever his interlocutor was possessed of any special branch of knowledge.

Abraham was sympathetic in nature and hospitable withal, assisting many charities in the practical way that the fortunate possession of means from the earliest enabled and pleased him to do.

His sense of humour was not inconsiderable, as the writer, with an intimacy dating from Abraham's student days at St. Bartholomew's, can affirm, and notably when "taken for an Irishman," which always amused him.

That Abraham led a busy life was patent to all who knew him well, for he believed in Galen's maxim that "Employment is Nature's physician, and is essential to human happiness."

Abraham had many friends derived from all classes of society. He enjoyed considerable practice, especially amongst the Jewish community of which he was a member, until the time that his health commenced to fail many months ago. Early this year he secured a house at St. John's Wood, to which he removed with his family a few weeks only before his death, which took place on February 23rd in his seventy-fifth year.

After cremation his ashes were deposited in the Jewish portion of the cemetery at Golder's Green in the presence of sorrowing relatives and friends, including numerous old hospital colleagues and contemporaries.

He is survived by his widow and one daughter, a sister, who devoted the chief years of her life to his service, and two brothers, for all of whom true sympathy will be felt.

JAMES H. STOWERS.

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