This article was downloaded by: [New York University]

On: 27 April 2015, At: 18:03

Publisher: Taylor & Francis

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number:
1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street,
London W1T 3JH, UK

Transactions of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/tped18>

Professor Allen Thomson,
M.D., LL.D., D.C.L., F.R.S. L.
& E.

Professor Cleland

Published online: 01 Dec 2010.

To cite this article: Professor Cleland (1886) Professor Allen Thomson, M.D., LL.D., D.C.L., F.R.S. L. & E., Transactions of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh, 16:1-4, 92-94, DOI: [10.1080/03746608609468234](https://doi.org/10.1080/03746608609468234)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03746608609468234>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

Heer's first great work was "On the Fossil Insects of Eningen and of Radoboj in Croatia." 1853.

Flora Fossilis Arctica (7 vols. 1300 pages, 399 plates). 1868-83.

Flora Tertiaria Helvetica (8 vols. 3500 pages). 1855.

Flora Fossilis Helvetica (1 vol. 70 plates). 1876.

Urvell der Schweiz, translated into French by Gaudin in 1865, and into English by J. Heywood in 1876. A new and enlarged edition appeared in 1879.

"Description of the Tertiary Flora of Bovey Tracy," *London Phil. Trans.* 1861.

Professor Allen Thomson, M.D., LL.D., D.C.L., F.R.S.

L. & E. By Professor CLELAND.

(Read 8th May 1884.)

Among the losses which this Society has sustained during the past year by death, it is our painful duty to record the name of Dr ALLEN THOMSON, who died on the 25th March, at his residence in London, and was buried on the 28th, close beside the remains of his brother, in the Dean Cemetery of Edinburgh.

Dr Thomson became a member of this Society on 9th April 1839.

He was the son of Dr John Thomson, Professor of Military Surgery, and afterwards of Pathology, in the University of Edinburgh, well known as the author of a work on Inflammation, and still better remembered as a notable figure in politics, a trusted adherent of the Whigs, and a powerful wielder of influence in that party. Nor was this circumstance without effects on the life of Allen Thomson, who was named after his father's friend, the well-known John Allen, long resident in Holland House, was brought much in contact with the Bedford family, and was assured, as he would sometimes playfully tell, of the Whig interest to secure for him a regius chair.

Though a member of this Society, and though the chair which he long held in the University of Glasgow was formerly termed the chair of Anatomy and Botany, and he was rather proud of his claim to be called a professor of the latter subject, retaining even a certain number of diagrams and preparations for its illustration, Dr Thomson's attention was devoted principally to the phenomena of animal life.

Immediately after his graduation he became the colleague of Dr Sharpey as a lecturer on Anatomy and Physiology, in Surgeons' Square, and the influence which Sharpey won over him continued until the death of the latter, showing itself not only in the veneration and affection with which Thomson justly regarded him, but even in the unconscious imitation of some of his modes of thought. In 1839 he was appointed to the chair of Anatomy in Aberdeen; in 1841, to the chair of Institutes of Medicine in Edinburgh; and finally, in 1848, to the chair of Anatomy in Glasgow, from which he retired in 1877.

The subject which formed the favourite study of Dr Thomson was Development. He was one of the first in this country systematically and continuously to draw attention to the importance of that study, and to devote himself especially to its details. His inaugural thesis, published in the *Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal*, October 1830 and January 1831, "On the development of the Vascular System in the Fœtus of Vertebrated Animals," gave an account of the researches of Wolff, Pander, Von Bær, Serres, Rathke, and others, and shows a mastery of the whole subject of development, so far as it had been investigated at that time. Having made himself thus familiar at the commencement of his career with embryological literature, he continued to the last to keep himself abreast with its advances, as may be seen by consulting his elaborate chapter on Development in the ninth edition of Quain's *Anatomy*. In the later years of his professoriate his attention was greatly distracted from scientific subjects by the interest which he took in the removal of the site of the University of Glasgow from the High Street to Gilmour Hill; and it will be admitted by all who know about it that he took on himself an amount of labour greater than did any one else in that arduous undertaking, and that it is greatly owing to his energy and perseverance that the New University buildings are what they are, and that the Western Infirmary has been built in their vicinity.

In 1876 Dr Thomson was president of the British Association, and opened the proceedings of the meeting at Plymouth with an elaborate address "On the Development of the Forms of Animal Life," in which the facts of vegetable embryology were also referred to in illustration. His argument was in

favour of evolution ; but although he showed distinctly enough that his own inclination was to believe that for the explanation of the phenomena of life no order of things was required additional to those which are recognised in the inorganic world, he exhibited abundantly his habitual care not to commit himself to any dogmatic expression of speculative views in detail.

Perhaps it is owing to the circumstance that the bent of his mind was more in the direction of criticism than of independent exploration, that Dr Thomson has not left behind him any great monument of original work or discovery ; but a more thoroughly accomplished man, versed and interested in the progress of all branches of biology, is not often met with. His habitually urbane and gentle manner, his diplomatic tact, and, most of all, the exceedingly winning character of his smile, and the joyous expression which lit him up when he was more than usually pleased, will linger long in the memory of those who have experienced their wonderful influence.

Dr James Robson Scott, M.D. By F. DOUGLAS, M.D.,
Kelso.

(Read 13th March 1884.)

DR ROBSON SCOTT was the eldest son of Mr John Robson, tenant in Belford on Bowmont Water, and grandson of James Robson, Esq. of Samieston, whose name has long been held in grateful remembrance by Border farmers and stock-breeders as the first great improver in the breed of Cheviot sheep by crossing with the Leicester blood. Dr Scott was born at Belford in 1814, and, after a home education, entered the literary classes of Edinburgh University. He chose the study of medicine as a profession, and, after graduating in 1836, proceeded to India as an assistant-surgeon on the Madras Establishment of the East India Company. After serving some years in that Presidency, he accompanied his regiment to Singapore, and subsequently to China, towards the conclusion of the war with that country in 1844. On returning to Madras he served at Vellore, and afterwards for two years had medical charge of the Nilghiri Hills Sanitarium. Thence he took furlough to England, and, on his return to India, was appointed to a cavalry regiment, which he retained until he finally left the service in 1858. By his brother officers