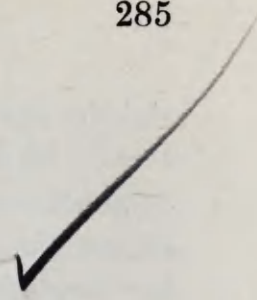


JOHN HAMMOND TEACHER, M.A., M.D., C.M., F.R.F.P.S.G.

Obituary.

JOHN HAMMOND TEACHER, M.A., M.D., C.M., F.R.F.P.S.G.,
ST. MUNGO (NOTMAN) PROFESSOR OF PATHOLOGY,
UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

WE have to record with deep regret the death of Professor John H. Teacher, which occurred on 21st November, 1930, after a brief illness.

Dr. Teacher was born in 1869, and was educated at Glasgow Academy and at the University of Glasgow. He graduated in Arts in 1889, and 1893 obtained the degrees of M.B., C.M. with high commendation. After holding appointments as house physician and house surgeon at the Western Infirmary, he became associated with the late Professor Coats in the Pathology Department at the Western Infirmary, where his interests became definitely directed to pathology. Later he was assistant to the late Professor McKendrick in the Department of Physiology, where he remained for a number of years. His work led him to the study of gynæcological pathology, however, and his most important and best known researches were on this subject.

From 1897 till 1900 Dr. Teacher devoted himself largely to the laborious task of classifying and arranging the anatomical and pathological collections of William Hunter in the Hunterian Museum of the University. His catalogue of this collection is recognized as an outstanding piece of work, the value of which continues to appreciate.

For a number of years, Dr. Teacher was pathologist to the Sick Children's Hospital and to the Cancer Hospital. Later, he became assistant to Professor Muir at the Western Infirmary, and lecturer in pathological histology in the University. The results of his researches were embodied in a thesis on chorionepithelioma, which he presented for the degree of Doctor of Medicine. This degree was conferred on him with honours, and the outstanding merit of his thesis was recognized by the award of a Bellahouston gold medal.

Dr. Teacher's name and work became widely known as the result of his discovery of what, until recent years, was the earliest recorded complete human ovum ("Teacher-Bryce ovum No. 1"). In collaboration with Professor T. H. Bryce, he published an elaborate and masterly description of this ovum—a study which is now a classic.

In 1909 Dr. Teacher left the Western Infirmary to become Professor of Pathology at St. Mungo's College, in the Royal Infirmary, and in 1911 he was appointed to the newly constituted St. Mungo (Notman) Chair of Pathology in the University. This chair he occupied with distinction until his death.

As Professor of Pathology and Pathologist to the Royal Infirmary, Dr. Teacher spent nineteen years of the most strenuous work. The organization of a new department, the task of teaching large classes of students, and the ever-increasing amount of routine hospital work, did not prevent him from continuing the histological investigations of obstetrical and gynaecological material which formed the subject of many of his important contributions to medical literature. In 1924 he had the good fortune to encounter a second early ovum ("Teacher-Bryce ovum No. 2"), which he studied and described in collaboration with Professor Bryce. His descriptions of symmetrical cortical necrosis of the kidneys in pregnancy, and of *ante-mortem* digestion of the œsophagus, are also noteworthy. In recent years he was engaged in writing a monograph on obstetrical and gynaecological pathology, in which the results of his lifelong study of this subject were embodied. It is understood that the preparation of this volume was so far advanced at the time of his death that its publication may be looked for in the near future.

Dr. Teacher was pre-eminent as a histologist, and his opinion on difficult points in diagnosis was highly valued by his colleagues. He was a lucid and inspiring teacher, and he spent much time and thought in training his students and assistants in practical pathology.

For many years Dr. Teacher was consulting pathologist to the Maternity Hospital and to the Cancer Hospital. His interest in both of these institutions was of a wider nature, however, for he was an active member of the board of directors

of both of them. He did not take responsibility lightly, and there is no doubt that his health was impaired by the additional calls upon his time which these positions demanded.

Dr. Teacher had many interests apart from his professional work. In his early days he played Rugby football, and was a keen Volunteer. His interest in sport, and more particularly in yachting, kept him in close contact with a younger generation. For some years he was president of the University Athletic Club, and he did much to promote its expansion and well-being. He had many friends, and was held in affectionate esteem both by his contemporaries and by his junior colleagues. His death was indeed untimely, for it seemed that one with so many active interests as he had, ought to have lived to enjoy the pleasures of old age.

We have received the following:—

JOHN HAMMOND TEACHER:

AN APPRECIATION.

It is with profound regret that we record the death of Professor John Hammond Teacher. Our *Alma Mater* has lost one of her most loyal sons, and many in Glasgow and the West of Scotland an old and trusted friend.

Of the "Sixth" who left the Glasgow Academy in 1885, seven selected the profession of Medicine, but only two—Jack Teacher and Alfred Young—elected to take a preliminary Arts curriculum. Teacher's education was on broad lines. Nurtured at school on the classics, he had the good fortune in the University to come under the influence of such men as Caird, Jebb, Kelvin, Bower, Cleland, McKendrick, Macewen, Gairdner, Coats.

With the type of mind Teacher inherited, and the training he received, it is little wonder that exactness was the outstanding characteristic of all his work. But he was no dry scientist. He maintained throughout life a youthful enthusiasm for the particular piece of work in which he was engaged.

Coats directed his interest to pathology. But undoubtedly

the years spent amongst the anatomical and pathological specimens of William Hunter, when it might be said he lived with Hunter, inspired him to specialize in a more restricted field of research. There he toiled most assiduously. "Early Development and Imbedding of the Human Ovum," published in 1908, and his later writings on the subject, are of the highest order. In this work he found in Bryce an ideal collaborator. They in turn inspired Maclaren. Amongst embryologists in this country none are held to-day in higher regard than Teacher, Bryce, and Maclaren.

Although Teacher will be remembered principally for his work on the early phases in the development of the human ovum, reference must be made to two most important contributions—his monograph on "Chorionepithelioma" and his papers, the first in association with Jardine, on "Cortical Necrosis of the Kidney," that peculiar lesion associated with some of the graver forms of toxæmia of pregnancy. In connexion with the former, it is characteristic of him that before publishing this work he visited a number of the laboratories on the Continent where this recently discovered neoplasm had aroused particular interest. Deserving of special mention also is the contribution he made, along with Pringle and Stewart, entitled "Digestion of the Œsophagus as a cause of Post-Operation and other forms of Hematemesis."

Teacher's work was always on a high and even level. He was not a prolific writer. He could not hustle; he preferred to work quietly in his own way. If one compares his first important contribution, the "Catalogue of the Anatomical and Pathological Preparations of Dr. William Hunter," and the last published in the *British Medical Journal* of 29th November, one week after his death, on "Normal Structure of Endometrium and Decidua and the Menstrual Cycle," there is no appreciable difference in quality. His introduction to the "Catalogue" and the annotations on specimens are, as the *Glasgow Herald* stated in its most appreciative obituary notice, "a model of their kind." His last paper is particularly interesting. By patient investigation he has gradually reached the culminating point where he definitely states his conclusions regarding the relationship between ovulation and menstruation, and the part played by the fertilized ovum in

determining the changes which occur in endometrium and corpus luteum during the early days of pregnancy. Here are his words :—“ Fertilization, even as late as the twenty-fourth day, prevents the menstrual breakdown, while early fertilization produces the decidual reaction. We conclude that the fate of the ovum governs the changes in the endometrium and the corpus luteum as well.”

What adds to the tragedy of his death is that he was cut off in the midst of a most important piece of work which he and the writer had many times discussed. The work was to be a treatise on Obstetrical and Gynæcological Pathology. Of a certainty it would have been a classic. There is no such work in the English language. It would have rivalled, possibly surpassed, Gebhart's *Pathologische Anatomie der Weiblichen Sexualorgane*, published in 1899. But it is more than doubtful if Teacher would have admitted this possibility, for he held Gebhart in the highest esteem, as did all who came in contact with this modest and indefatigable pathologist. We trust that someone will take up the torch, and that the existing manuscript will be utilized. No tribute to his memory could be more appropriate.

J. M. M. K.

WILLIAM SOMERVILLE, L.R.F.P.S.G. (1885), died at Liverpool on 21st October, 1930.

HUGH DICKIE, M.A., M.D. (1887), died at Morpeth on 22nd October, 1930.

JOHN H. TEACHER, M.A., M.D. (1903), F.R.F.P.S.G., died at Glasgow on 21st November, 1930.