Obituary.

ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL CLARK, M.D., F.F.P.S.G.

The medical profession in Glasgow and its neighbourhood will have heard, with general regret, of the death of Dr. Archibald Campbell Clark, who passed away at his residence, Hartwood, on the morning of 28th November.

Dr. Clark had been in failing health for over a year, his lingering illness beginning with a somewhat severe attack of influenza. Well-marked asthmatic symptoms developed, and a trip to America did not improve his condition. Pleural effusion was discovered on one side of the chest, and there was also albuminuria. His condition afterwards improved greatly, and he spent a portion of last winter travelling, chiefly in the south of England. About the beginning of summer he came home, having lost ground all round, and, thereafter, his illness progressed unfavourably, with transient periods of improvement. Dyspnœa, dyspepsia, sickness, insomnia, and, latterly, dropsy of the lower limbs and ascites, were the leading features of his illness.

Dr. Clark was born in Lochgilphead about fifty years ago. He received his early training at the parish school, but he had not the advantage of a secondary education. His father died early, but the mother's love and strength of will had an inspiring influence on her boys, for two rose to be successful medical men, and the other is flourishing in America.

In his youth he held a subordinate post in the asylum at Lochgilphead, and this, perhaps, determined his choice of lunacy work as his vocation in life.

Coming to Glasgow at an early age to push his way, he entered the warehouse of J. & W. Campbell, and there received a good business training, which stood him in good stead all his life, and no doubt contributed to those habits of punctuality, method, and order that were so characteristic of the man. Thereafter, he proceeded to Edinburgh to study medicine, and, after a successful course, graduated as bachelor of medicine in 1878, a few years later gaining the doctorate with honours.

He was an assistant medical officer at Melrose Asylum for some months, and later with Dr. Clouston, at Morningside. Thence he was promoted to be medical superintendent at Kirklands Asylum, where he laboured for about fourteen
years; and, finally, he was appointed medical superintendent of Lanark District Asylum, Hartwood, which was opened in 1895. The writer had the privilege of being his first assistant at Hartwood.

Dr. Clark was Professor of Psychological Medicine in St. Mungo’s College, Glasgow, and at the time of his death was President of the Caledonian Medical Society.

Hartwood Asylum is built on a piece of moorland, and immense labour was involved in its erection and in reclaiming the waste ground, and transforming the face of rude nature into a veritable garden. In addition to this, much energy was spent on organising the asylum and bringing the whole into level with modern requirements. The strain of all this work, worry and responsibility undoubtedly had an adverse influence on Dr. Clark’s health, for he worked incessantly and at high pitch. Indeed, this seemed to be the normal condition of the man. Whatever he did, he did with his whole might.

Carlyle’s gospel of work never received a better embodiment than in the person of the deceased. It was his ruling passion. A fortnight before he died, he actually dictated articles to the press. On his sickbed his presidential address was worked out.

Dr. Clark laid no claims to genius, but his career is a fine illustration of what a strenuous character imbued with a love of work can attain to by persevering industry. Undoubtedly, he had great abilities, but he had something more than that. His moral fibre was stronger than his intellectual one, and this moral strength gave him an ascendancy over his patients, assistants, and staff, and kept them all braced up with a well-ordered discipline.

Hartwood Asylum is Dr. Clark’s monument. He is buried within its grounds, and all his hopes and fears were centred there.

In his earlier career he made a careful study of the etiology, course, and treatment of puerperal insanity, and he was justly regarded as an authority on the subject.

Dr. Clark had a feeling of gratification in the fact that he was the pioneer, in this country, of inaugurating courses of instruction for asylum nurses and attendants, which have now become general all the world over, and have proved of the greatest benefit.

In 1897 his magnum opus appeared, under the title of Clinical Manual of Mental Diseases. It was well received, although some were rather upset by the startling announcement in the preface, “that the pathology of insanity has yet
to be written." His book is silent on the pathology of insanity, and the fact that such terms as mania, melancholia, and dementia form the three categories under which mental diseases are classified more than justified his bold assertion.

Some years ago Dr. Clark made the curious observation that the spleens of patients dying insane were below the average size of those who died from other causes. He experimented largely, by giving a suitable extract of spleen to the patients. The results of his observations went to prove that splenic extract was a powerful stimulant, and could be usefully employed in not a few cases. Later on, he made some observations on the speech of epileptics, which were published in Glasgow Hospital Reports.

He was a voluminous contributor to the lay papers, particularly the Glasgow Herald.

Dr. Clark leaves a widow and three of a family to mourn his loss. He was cut down at the height of his manhood, and when his powers were at their best. But the influences for good he wielded, by his stainless character, by his devotion to the mentally sick and afflicted, and by the impulses he gave to those around him to hunger for fuller knowledge and better practice, will pass on from unit to unit far beyond his own lifetime.

J. T. M.

CURRENT TOPICS.

GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL.—Dr. Bruce, of Dingwall, has again been elected as direct representative of the practitioners of Scotland.

THE THISETH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SCOTTISH MID-LAND AND WESTERN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION was held in St. Enoch's Hotel, Glasgow, on Friday, 25th October, 1901, under the presidency of Dr. John Goff, Bothwell. There was a large attendance of members. The following were elected office-bearers for the year 1902:—President-Elect, Dr. Jones, Motherwell; Vice-President, Dr. Baxter, Hurlford; Secretary, Dr. Crawford, Hamilton; Treasurer, Dr. Livingstone Loudon, Hamilton; Members of Council, Dr. Service, Dr. Kirkland, Dr. Willis, Dr. Grant, Dr. Beveridge, Dr. Robertson, Dr. Arthur, Dr. Loudon, Dr. Fotheringham, Dr. Macphail, Dr. A. K. Chalmers, Dr. Goff.