Maurice Cassidy.

MAURICE CASSIDY

Maurice Alan Cassidy died at his home in London on October 22, 1949, in his seventieth year. He was the eldest son of a doctor, D. M. Cassidy, C.B.E., who was for fifty years medical superintendent of the Lancaster Mental Hospital. After his schooldays at Lancaster, Cassidy went to Clare College, Cambridge, where he was a scholar and obtained first-class honours in both parts of the Natural Science Tripos. He then entered St. Thomas' Hospital, with which he was closely associated for the rest of his life. He showed great ability as a student, and after qualifying in 1905 he held there several resident posts, including that of Resident Assistant Physician for two years; in addition, he was a demonstrator of physiology and medical registrar.

About this time, Cassidy had thoughts of following an academic career and he was offered a Fellowship of his Cambridge College, but he decided to remain in London. He was elected F.R.C.P. in 1913 and in the same year he joined the honorary staff of St. Thomas' Hospital. In 1914 he was Goulstonian lecturer at the College of Physicians. During the 1914-18 war Cassidy spent two years in the army, partly in France, where he was physician to an Anglo-Belgian hospital at Calais. In 1916, however, he had the misfortune to contract pulmonary tuberculosis, which led to his being invalided from the army, and he did not return to full work for two years. Those who knew him well at this time speak of the courage and determination with which he bore and overcame his disability.

In addition to his work at St. Thomas', Cassidy was for many years chief medical officer to the Metropolitan Police and on retiring from this post in 1929 he was awarded the C.B. He was also for many years consulting physician to Lord Mayor Treloar's Cripples Hospital at Alton, to King Edward VII Sanatorium at Midhurst, and to the Children's Heart Hospital at West Wickham. He retired from the active staff of St. Thomas' just before the 1939-45 war, but within a month of its outbreak he was back again at active work and there gave much of his time both in the wards and in the outpatient department until he finally retired late in 1945.

Many other honours came to Cassidy. At the Royal College of Physicians he successively held the offices of Councillor, Censor, and Senior Censor, and in 1946 he was appointed Harveian Orator. In 1946-48 he was President of the Royal Society of Medicine, and in 1949 he was elected an honorary fellow of his old college at Cambridge—an honour that gave him great pleasure.

Cassidy's name was familiar to a wide circle outside the profession owing to his long connection with the Royal Household. In 1930 he was appointed Physician to the Household, and in 1932 Physician in Ordinary to King George V and then Physician in Ordinary to King George VI. During this period he had grave responsibilities which he met with characteristic courage and wisdom. He was created K.C.V.O. in 1934 and shortly before Cassidy's death His Majesty conferred upon him the signal honour of visiting him in his home and investing him with the G.C.V.O.

Cassidy became interested in cardiology early in his career. In 1913 he studied under Thomas Lewis at University College Hospital, where he met most of those who are now the older generation of London cardiologists. Lewis chiefly taught us how to use the polygraph and the Cambridge Einthoven string galvanometer, the reading of the tracings, and the mode of production of the various arrhythmias. This early interest in cardiology grew with the years, but by no means to the exclusion of his interest in general medicine. Cassidy was elected a member of the Cardiac Club in 1926. He introduced a discussion on vasomotor angina at the Leeds meeting in 1934 and he was chairman at the London meeting in 1935. He was also chairman of the British Cardiac Society meeting at St. Thomas' Hospital in 1943. He wrote several papers of clinical cardiological interest

and for his Harveian Oration he chose the subject of coronary disease, of which he had exceptional experience.

Maurice Cassidy was an outstanding physician of his time. His greatness lay in a blend of attributes of character with professional skill. Success never affected him adversely, and his ambition seemed to be to serve and satisfy the needs of his patients who quickly perceived his skill and his sympathy.

Sir Charles Max Page writes, "I was associated with Maurice Cassidy in work and play since he came up to St. Thomas's in 1902 and I should like to add a short note. Though Cassidy's professional standing was based on his interest in cardiology, he remains in my memory as a general physician gifted with a singular intuitive ability in diagnosis and possessed of a very human sympathy. His sense of humour and interest in the foibles of humanity lightened his attitude to his work and I think assisted him in gaining the confidence and devotion of his patients. His cheerfulness and courage in withstanding and overcoming the ill-health that threatened his future on more than one occasion gave some measure of the strength of his character.

"He had developed the ability to concentrate on the current task to an enviable degree. When in London he took little time off his professional work; on holiday whether fishing or deer-stalking he displayed amazing energy and stamina.

"His death has deprived London of a fine physician and stolen from many of us a loveable companion."

Cassidy married in 1918, Elsie, daughter of Frederick Relfe, and she proved an ideal companion and a gracious hostess. There were no children. Somewhat shy by nature, he was a man of high courage and integrity; he loved his fellow men, so that his abounding kindness and human understanding not only benefited his patients but were always at the disposal of the many who sought his help and guidance. As a physician he possessed a wide knowledge of medicine which he applied with a clear mind, common sense, and wisdom. The union of these qualities made him the ideal physician to innumerable patients, students and nurses, his colleagues and friends.

ARNOLD STOTT