

his work. He always did this splendidly, but, in addition, he managed to infuse into the routine work of dressing cases, removing tonsils and adenoids, and seeing out-patients a humour and jolliness which were the expression of his outlook on life. Everyone was brighter when he came and so got through the daily task with less conscious effort and probably did it better.

"When one thinks of his personality, his energy, his ability, and his exuberant good health, it brings home the wastefulness of war which leaves those who are so much less fit to continue the struggle of everyday life. Still such a war as is now being waged demands the best a nation can produce, and Major Porter was undoubtedly one of these."

J. S. F.

VICTOR DELSAUX (Brussels),

Born 1861. Died 1917.

AMONGST the wholesale horrors of the present war, although

"Each new morn,
New widows howl; new orphans cry; new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face,"

yet single instances of misery sometimes bring home to us even more acutely the "weight of this sad time." The death of Jules Broeckaert amongst us in London, an exile from his native land, and now the death of Victor Delsaux, a prisoner in his own beloved country, fill us, as Prof. Tapia says in the *Revista Española de Laringología*, with "una impresión de imborrable tristeza." They were not only leading men in Ghent and Bruxelles, but were both such distinguished laryngologists and had contributed such valuable work in advancing our speciality, that their names were well known to every laryngologist in the world.

Victor Delsaux was born in 1861 and spent his childhood in his native town of Fleurus. He went to school at Dinant, little dreaming of the days when this picturesque city on the Meuse would be ruined by the brutalities of war. Entering the University of Bruxelles in 1879 he devoted his first two years to the study of natural sciences. After qualifying, he passed a year in the best known clinics in Paris, and settled down to a family practice amongst the poor of Bruxelles. Whilst thus engaged he obtained the post of assistant with Profs. Capart and Delstanche *père*, perfecting himself in oto-rhino-laryngology and gradually withdrawing himself from general practice.

About this time he showed his cosmopolitan tastes for travel and culture, visiting London, Petrograd, Moscow, Zurich, Berne, Geneva, the chief Italian cities, and the Scandinavian and neighbouring German countries. He went still further, visiting the Island of Madeira, where he did not forget to inspect and study its leper hospitals, and touring in Morocco where he did not omit to see its hospitals and gaols. During these travels, as later on, he formed a large circle of acquaintances with colleagues, clinics and learned societies, and from each journey he brought back observations which widened his views and deepened his sympathies, as well as books which he was continually adding to his cherished library. For he was a great reader, and owing to his linguistic talents he was able to devote himself to the medical literature of half a dozen languages.

Working so long as "médecin-adjoint" at the hospital and

university work of Prof. Delstauche, it is not surprising that on the latter's death in 1900, Delsaux should be promoted to follow him as Chef de Clinique at the Hôpital St. Jean. At this time Delsaux was forty years of age, and he then started on the full and vigorous career for which he had so carefully trained himself. Not only did he lecture to students, manage a large clinic, and build up a large private practice, but he devoted attention to such things as photography, electricity, radio-therapy, the spreading of antiseptic surgery, and the diffusion of fresh-air principles, but in all these directions he gave a full measure of prodigious energy and rare talent.

He founded the *Presse Oto-Rhino-Laryngologique Belge*, and remained its editor until the red ruin of war arrested the progress of science and substituted an empire of barbarism. This journal soon obtained a high scientific reputation among the researchers and literary men of all countries. His own contributions to it were considerable and made him a well-known international figure, still further increased by his travels and investigations in France, Algiers, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Spain, Canada, and the United States.

Many of us had the opportunity of being further attracted by his charming personality when we travelled on the same ship with him to Quebec to attend the Toronto meeting of the British Medical Association in 1906, under the presidency of Dr. Dundas Grant. And we also had the pleasure of welcoming him at the Belfast meeting of the Association in 1909, when he read an interesting paper on "Laryngostomy."

Delsaux had an international spirit, but it was of the sincere and generous type. Like all wise travellers, he did not go abroad to think less of his native land, but to return to it a still truer and more enthusiastic patriot, only anxious that it should advance along any of the paths of progress he had spied out during his travels. Thus he was among the first to start in Bruxelles a private nursing home, founded on what he had seen here and in the private hospitals of America. He was a keen supporter of the Touring Club de Belgique, a patriotic and philanthropic association for which we have no analogy in this country. Its object is to improve the facilities and conveniences of travel in Belgium, and to make them appeal more to the appreciation of foreigners. In the *Bulletin* of the Club one can find many of Delsaux's articles written about places of interest, mines, industrial establishments, and so forth. The vein of humour, wit, and vigour running through them recalls his own charming and vivacious conversation. Another work making for international understanding at which he toiled was an effort to index and number the medical publications of all countries and give them in a paper called the *Office International de Bibliographie*, established in Bruxelles. When one recalls that the *Presse Oto-Rhino-Laryngologique Belge*, carefully edited, came out monthly and punctually, that he had all the manifold interests I have mentioned, and that he was such a far traveller, it is astonishing that he still found time to keep his friendships in repair. Yet there was no more sociable man in Europe, amongst high or low, rich or poor, than the large-hearted and generous Victor Delsaux. The Italians would have called him a "buonaccione," a term which is not altogether well translated by "a jolly good fellow," and the little children of the poor at the Hôpital St. Jean always referred to him as their "cher gros docteur." For children he always had an affection, and even when his country was in the hands of the Bosches he worked hard at establishing and managing a "mother's canteen" where more than 12,000

destitute children have been saved from perishing in Bruxelles from want of food.

Delsaux had no national prejudices, and was welcome, and made himself welcome in every country he visited. Naturally enough, the affinity of language attracted him to France, where many of us have met him at the annual gatherings of the *Société Française d'Otolaryngologie*. Just before the war he was engaged, in collaboration with Lermoyez, of Paris, and Moure, of Bordeaux, in producing a monumental work on otology and laryngology. I do not know whether his part has been completed, but I hear that his heroic and strenuous character is proved by the fact that, even during the last year, although a prisoner in his own country, he had been able to complete an important "Traité de Laryngologie Pratique."

His affection for England, her ways, and her people is best proved by recalling that outside of Bruxelles, in the Valley of Epinette, on the borders of the lovely forest of Soignes and not very far from the historic field of Waterloo, he had built a country house, which was not only modelled on the style of the timbered cottages of England, but to it he had given the English name of "Firwood." Here the friends of all countries who visited Bruxelles, or attended its scientific gatherings, were always welcome. They were sure of charming hospitality either at Firwood or in the various restaurants which he knew so well in the neighbourhood of the Grande Place. Not that Delsaux was either a *gourmand* or *gourmet*, but he was what the Germans call a "Feinschmecker," and showed his taste in his entertainments as he did in his appreciation of literature, art, music, or travel.

Last winter he was stricken with appendicitis on January 25. He died on February 3, and was followed to his grave by a crowd of mourners on a day of freezing cold, and with the German flag flying over Brussels in a bitter wind.

He lies in the cemetery of Ixelles alongside of his wife, whom he lost in 1891, after a short two years of wedded life. For her memory he always retained a touching devotion.

It is heartrending to think that Belgium, brutally beaten down by "military necessity," should have lost in Delsaux such a gallant son. But it is not only Belgium, it is the science and humanity of the civilised world which share in this loss. Some of us will look forward sadly to visiting that cemetery at Ixelles, when the German flag no longer waves over Belgium.

STCLAIR THOMSON.

Abstracts.

LARYNX.

Heart Failure during an Operation for the Removal of Tonsils and Adenoids; Heart Massage through an Abdominal Incision; Recovery.—Mollinson, W. M. "Proceedings of Royal Society of Medicine, Section of Anæsthetics," December, 1916, p. 1.

The patient was a boy, aged six. A mixture of chloroform (two parts) and ether (three parts) was administered on an open mask; without any struggling the boy became unconscious, but the corneal reflex was never lost.