

## MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

### ERNEST C. DICKSON (1881 – 1939)

The death of Ernest Charles Dickson, Professor of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, on August 23, 1939, ended the fruitful career of an able investigator and teacher, an important contributor to the solution of important problems of public health and clinical medicine and a colleague whose friendship and collaboration have for many years been prized by his associates.

Born in 1881 in Newmarket, Ontario, Dr. Dickson received his academic and medical education in the University of Toronto from which he took the degrees of B.A. in 1904, M.B. in 1906 and M.D. in 1917. After a year in the Toronto General Hospital as intern and research scholar in pathology and a year at Johns Hopkins as assistant resident physician, he came to Stanford in 1908, where he spent the rest of his professional life. Until 1913 he was with Dr. Ophuls in the Department of Pathology. For the next thirteen years he was a member of the Department of Medicine, except during the Great War when in 1918-19 he served as Captain in the Canadian Army Medical Corps. During this period he re-organized the laboratory of Clinical Bacteriology which he directed until his death. In 1926 a separate Department of Public Health and Preventive Medicine was created at the School of Medicine and Dr. Dickson was appointed its first Professor and Executive Head. For the last ten years of his active career he had successfully overcome the increasing handicaps of severe hypertension, continued with his teaching and administrative duties and prosecuted an important research project which he lives to see well on its way to solution.

Among the many valuable contributions to medical knowledge which Dr. Dickson made, two were of outstanding importance and brought him merited fame. He played a major role in the comprehensive study of botulism carried out during the years 1915 to 1925, which by safeguarding the methods of food preservation prevented the loss of innumerable lives and saved the canning industry from enormous losses. The second was the intensive study of coccidioides infection to which the latter years of his life were largely devoted. This work clarified many obscurities in the spread, in nature and in the human body, of a disease that is common and serious in certain areas of the West. His descriptions of the acute form of coccidioidal infection, the first to be published in the general medical literature, are of prime clinical importance.

Dr. Dickson's professional life was characterized by the combination of industry, perseverance, thoroughness in detail and critical acumen which is necessary to scientific accomplishment of permanent value. He was a loyal friend and trusted counselor to student and faculty member alike. We treasure the memory of our association with him and mourn his loss.

L. R. Chandler  
Arthur L. Bloomfield  
Harold K. Faber