
KATSUSABURO YAMAGIWA

Dr. Katsusaburo Yamagiwa, professor of pathology at the Tokyo Imperial University, Japan, died on March 2, 1930.

Dr. Yamagiwa was born at Ueda, Province of Shinano, on February 23, 1863. He studied medicine at the Tokyo Imperial University and was graduated in 1888. The following year he received the degree of Doctor of Medicine from the college of his alma mater.

From 1888 to 1890 he held a lectureship in pathology at the Tokyo Imperial University. In 1891, he was made assistant professor and the same year the Japanese Government sent him to Germany for further study of tuberculin under Robert Koch. However, because of his scientific disagreement and conflict with Dr. Kitasato, who was one of the pupils of Professor Koch, and because of his preference for pathology, he left Professor Koch and became associated with Rudolph Virchow at Berlin. He returned to Tokyo in 1894 and the same year he was made professor of pathology at the Tokyo Imperial University.

In 1898, he was sent by the Japanese Government to Formosa to investigate bubonic plague. About this time he became afflicted with pulmonary tuberculosis which was a severe handicap until his death. Nevertheless his courage enabled him to bring to a successful conclusion many difficult experiments. His perseverance in the experimental study of cancer undoubtedly led him to the great triumph of September 25, 1915, when he succeeded in producing cancerous growths in rabbits' ears after the repeated application of coal-tar. Dr. Yamagiwa, while not a genius, possessed that attribute which has been described as an infinite capacity for taking pains.

Shortly before Dr. Yamagiwa's success, Fibiger of Denmark had succeeded in producing gastric carcinoma in rats by infecting with a parasite called *Spiroptera neoplastica*. Fibiger was



KATSUSABURO YAMAGIWA

rewarded with the Nobel prize in 1926 for his priority in proving Virchow's irritation theory of cancer experimentally. Judging from the number of experiments subsequently carried out by numerous investigators on tar cancer, it appears that Yamagiwa's work on the production of tar cancer in animals is decidedly more valuable than that of Fibiger on experimental gastric carcinoma in the rat.

Dr. Yamagiwa lived a very simple life. His only diversion, when away from his laboratory, was writing poetry. He was not a golfer nor an angler. These very pleasant but notoriously time-consuming pastimes had no place in his life. On the other hand, he always had time for his friends and his students. When he retired from active teaching at the Tokyo Imperial University seven years ago his former students presented him with a beautiful house. This was the first and only time he ever owned a home.

He taught at the Tokyo Imperial University for 40 years and published 170 papers largely on the etiology of cancer, immunity to cancer, the relation between carcinoma and sarcoma, on the pathology of beri-beri and bubonic plague. Dr. Yamagiwa was the founder of "Gann," the Japanese Journal of Cancer Research, which he edited from 1907 to 1917. Dr. Yamagiwa was a great teacher as well as a skillful investigator. He was an international figure, much beloved by his students and greatly respected by his countrymen.

In 1919, he received a medal from the Imperial Academy of Japan for his work on tar cancer, and the same year he was elected to membership in that highest academic institute in the Empire. In 1929, he received the Sophie A. Nordhoff-Jung Cancer Research Prize from Germany. Just a short time prior to his death, Dr. Yamagiwa was decorated by the Emperor of Japan with the First Class Imperial Order of the Sacred Treasure.

In the death of Dr. Yamagiwa, Japan has lost one of its great men and science a stimulating personality.

Dr. Yamagiwa is survived by his wife, Mrs. Kane-Ko Yamagiwa, three sons, and two daughters.

KANEMATSU SUGIURA.