Shibasaburo Kitasato Biography

Shibasaburo Kitasato

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

Contents

Shibasaburo Kitasato Biography.....1

Contents.....2

Biography.....3

Biography

Bacteriologist Shibasaburo Kitasato made several important contributions to the understanding of human disease and how the body fights off infection. He also discovered the bacterium that causes **bubonic plague**.

Born in Kumamoto, Japan, Kitasato, completed his medical studies at the University of Tokyo in 1883. Shortly after, he traveled to Berlin to work in the laboratory of **Robert Koch**. Among his greatest accomplishments, Kitasato discovered a way of growing a pure **culture** of **tetanus** bacillus using anaerobic methods in 1889. In the following year, Kitasato and German microbiologist **Emil von Behring** reported on the discovery of tetanus and **diphtheria** antitoxin. They found that animals injected with the microbes that cause tetanus or diphtheria produced substances in their blood, called antitoxins, which neutralized the toxins produced by the microbes. Furthermore, these antitoxins could be injected into healthy animals, providing them with **immunity** to the microbes. This was a major finding in explaining the workings of the **immune system**. Kitasato went on to discover **anthrax** antitoxin as well.

In 1892, Kitasato returned to Tokyo and founded his own laboratory. Seven years later, the laboratory was taken over by the Japanese government, and Kitasato was appointed its director. When the laboratory was consolidated with the University of Tokyo, however, Kitasato resigned and founded the Kitasato Institute.

During an outbreak of the bubonic plague in Hong Kong in 1894, Kitasato was sent by the Japanese government to research the disease. He isolated the bacterium that caused the plague. (Alexandre Yersin, 1863 - 1943, independently announced the discovery of the organism at the same time). Four years later, Kitasato and his student Kigoshi Shiga were able to isolate and describe the organism that caused one form of **dysentery**.

Kitasato was named the first president of the Japanese Medical Association in 1923, and was made a baron by the Emperor in 1924. He died in Japan in 1931.