

OBITUARY

HERBERT TILLEY, M.D., F.R.C.S.

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WE announce with great regret that Mr. Herbert Tilley died on January 6th, aged 74. He was born at Shepton Mallet, Somerset, and was educated at Queen's College, Taunton, and University College Hospital. He graduated M.B., B.S. of the University of London in 1890, took the M.D. in the following year, and was granted the diploma of F.R.C.S. in 1898. He was consulting surgeon to the Ear, Nose and Throat Department (Royal Ear Hospital) of University College Hospital and Laryngologist to the Radium Institute. In 1931-2 he was President of the Medical Society of London and in 1932 was elected a Fellow of University College. He joined the British Medical Association in 1895, was Secretary of the Section of Laryngology and Otology when the Association met at Portsmouth in 1899, was Vice-President of the same Section at Ipswich in 1900, and was President of the Section of Laryngology at the London Meeting in 1910. He was a valued member of the Board of this Journal for 20 years.

The passing of Herbert Tilley will evoke profound regret among a large section of the profession, for he occupied during many years an outstanding position in British laryngology. He first practised in Hampstead, an experience which he always regarded as of great value, but soon became interested in laryngology, and was appointed to the staff of the Throat Hospital in Golden Square. When a department for diseases of the throat and ear was established at University College Hospital he was appointed to take charge of it, and it was to the welfare and development of that department that he thereafter devoted his time and energy unsparingly. The department, which eventually became amalgamated with the Royal Ear Hospital and, by the liberality of Geoffrey Duveen, is housed in a carefully designed building adjacent to University College Hospital, was his special pride. He took up the study of laryngology at a period of very active progress, when development was proceeding in almost every direction, and his own contributions were mostly in connexion with the pathology and surgery of the accessory sinuses of the nose. He wrote much about this, especially in the later editions of a book of which the first had come from Dr. de Havilland Hall, whilst the fourth and last edition, so much

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revised and expanded as to be almost a new book, came from himself alone. Finally, in 1934, he gave a final exposition of his views on the pathology of sinusitis in a Semon Lecture, which was filled with original clinical observation and wisdom. This work established his reputation both on the Continent and in the United States, so that besides having the unusual distinction of being President of both the Section of Laryngology and the Section of Otology at the Royal Society of Medicine, he received the rare honour of admission to that exclusive body the American Laryngological Society. To travel with him was a delightful experience, for he counted all the leading Continental laryngologists among his friends and his friendly generous character attracted everyone.

There is one activity by which probably he would particularly wish to be remembered, and that is his long connexion with the Semon Lecture Board. When the lectureship was founded by Sir Felix Semon with the fund subscribed for him by his friends and colleagues, it was placed in the care of the University of London and the University wisely—sometimes officially and sometimes unofficially—committed it to the charge of Tilley. With such discretion did he discharge this trust that the reputation of this lectureship stands very high. He himself spoke of it once as the blue riband of laryngology, and it was due to him that it could be so described. It was characteristic of him that for many years he persistently refused to deliver the lecture himself on account of his connexion with the management, and it was not until 1934 that his scruples were finally overborne by the vehemence of some younger colleagues.

Tilley easily attracted round him in his clinic keen workers, to whom he was kind and generous, and many of these hold important positions elsewhere. Much of his work is of permanent importance, especially that on the accessory sinuses and on the prognostic significance of a fixed vocal cord, but, above all, he will always be remembered as the perfect colleague.