

OBITUARY

DR. DAN MCKENZIE

DAN MCKENZIE was one of the few remaining laryngologists whose earlier professional life was spent in general practice, and he often said that this experience was the secret of any success that he had attained as a specialist, because he held that a wide perspective of medicine was absolutely essential before focussing attention on any of its branches.

McKenzie was the eldest of a large family and his responsibilities became truly heavy when his father died at the age of 45. The strain of carrying on the large and exacting practice in Lanark proved to be too great, and with his brilliant University record he decided to migrate southwards. He practised general medicine for some time in Leytonstone and then worked at the Central London Throat and Ear Hospital, being in due course elected to the staff. His progress to seniority and to fame was uninterrupted and conspicuous. Amongst his other accomplishments was his capacity for acquiring or probably teaching himself foreign languages without that residence abroad that others have found indispensable, whilst he enriched the circle in which he revolved by his studies in social, legendary and literary lore, and especially by an outflow of poetry—sweet, sonorous and essentially spontaneous. He was wonderfully alive to the sufferings of his fellow creatures from the increasing amount of noise to which they were exposed, giving them bright and eminently readable expression in the *City of Din* and using his remarkable powers of declamatory utterance in the crusade against noise.

McKenzie was an indefatigable worker and contributed numerous articles to the medical journals as well as bringing out his well-known text book on *Diseases of the Ear, Nose and Throat*. He also found time to edit the *Journal of Laryngology and Otology* for many years and had the very difficult task of keeping it alive during the war years.

McKenzie was a brilliant debater and with his commanding figure and countenance, along with his powerful voice, he was always able to get an attentive hearing, and generally to carry conviction captive even when in his most iconoclastic mood. He was certainly *tenax propositi vir*, calling to his aid logical and rhetorical powers of no mean order.

As a teacher he was superb and in his hospital work indefatigable.

In his earlier days, a little autocratic and apt to excite some degree of resentment on the part of those under him, when better

General Notes

understood he became one of the best beloved and most highly esteemed members of the staff by colleagues, nursing staff and patients alike. His was certainly a remarkable character, and his occasional abruptness of manner was far outweighed by the genial warmth of his emotional disposition. Kind, humorous, tolerant, it will be long before he is forgotten.

JAMES DUNDAS-GRANT.

GENERAL NOTES

ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE,

1 Wimpole Street, London, W.1.

Section of Laryngology. The next Meeting of the Section will be held on Friday, February 7th, at 5 p.m. The meeting will be a clinical one, but there will be a short communication by Mr. Maxwell Ellis on "The mechanism of the bronchial movements and the nasopulmonary reflex".

President: L. Colledge, F.R.C.S., 2 Upper Wimpole Street, London, W.1.

Honorary Secretaries: F. C. Ormerod, F.R.C.S., 22 Upper Wimpole Street, London, W.1, and W. A. Mill, M.S., 89 Harley Street, London, W.1.

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Section of Otolology. The next Meeting of the Section will be held on Friday, February 7th, at 10.30 a.m. There will be a discussion on "The value of radiology in diseases of the ear", opened by Mr. Stirk Adams and Mr. Cawthorne

President: H. A. Kisch, F.R.C.S., 15 Wimpole Street, London, W.1.

Honorary Secretaries: C. P. Wilson, F.R.C.S., 15 Upper Wimpole Street, London, W.1, and G. H. Howells, F.R.C.S., 79 Wimpole Street, London, W.1.

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SIR FELIX SEMON

(1849-1921)

The Semon Lecture is printed on another page. As a matter of personal and historical interest we think it might interest those who come after to reproduce here the personal appreciation of Semon by one who came in frequent contact with him. Sir St Clair Thomson's introductory remarks were as follows:

"This lecture was founded in 1913, and during his lifetime, by the many friends, pupils and admirers of Sir Felix Semon. We laryngologists owe much to Semon. He came, an alien, to this country at a time when ours was the Cinderella of the specialities. Without any vested interest here from family, school or university, struggling with a foreign language which he only began to master after landing in England at the age of 26, he rose to be a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, to be on the staff of one of our largest teaching hospitals, to be Physician Extraordinary to the King, to have one of the largest practices in his