

The Journal of Laryngology and Otology

(Founded in 1887 by MORRELL MACKENZIE and NORRIS WOLFENDEN)

October 1961

EDITORIAL NOTE

IT WAS with great regret that the Directors of the *Journal of Laryngology and Otology* accepted the resignation of the Editor, Mr. W. G. Howarth, at their meeting on September 6th, 1961.

A change of editor is not a common occurrence with this Journal. The last change was in 1929. Mr. Howarth has occupied this post for thirty-two years. During this time the Journal has survived a great war and today has a bigger circulation than ever in its history. It is hard to assess his contribution to the survival and growth of the Journal. He inherited it from his famous Edinburgh predecessors, Drs. Logan Turner and J. S. Fraser, in a healthy state. He transplanted it from Edinburgh to London, and has kept it in a vigorous and flourishing condition ever since. He has looked after it for so long that very few of his present colleagues can remember the Journal before Walter Howarth was the Editor. The sense of loss felt by his co-Directors at his resignation can therefore be imagined, and the reluctance with which they accepted it will be shared by all contributors.

During the last few years Walter Howarth has had several periods of ill health, but he has always managed to retain effective control of the Journal, and his has been the hand which has maintained the standard of the Journal through all the difficulties of war, austerity, paper control and printers' strike. He has increased the circulation in all parts of the world, and of a monthly issue of over 1,500 copies, more than 1,000 are posted overseas. The Journal has always tried to maintain a high standard of paper, printing and illustration, and we think that under Mr. Howarth's leadership this objective has been achieved. There can be few monthly journals, without a paid editorial staff, in which the standard has been so well maintained.

In May this year Walter Howarth was taken ill, and he has not yet recovered sufficiently to resume control of the Journal. He was unwilling to remain in nominal charge without being able to exercise real control, and he therefore resigned his post rather than create difficulties for the deputies who were continuing the publication of the Journal. All of us associated with the Journal were reluctant to accept his resignation, but acceded because we felt that an institution

Editorial Note

which had been growing since 1887 was more important than an individual, even though that individual had been the most important influence in its present existence, apart from the original founders, Morell Mackenzie and Norris Wolfenden.

The Journal has existed for seventy-four years, and during the last thirty-two years Walter Howarth has directed its fortunes with conspicuous success. If he had done nothing else, Otolaryngology in Great Britain would owe him a great debt. This is not the case. He had established himself in Otolaryngology in this country before he accepted the responsibility for the Journal. He was a pioneer in this country for peroral endoscopy. He was the first throat surgeon at St. Thomas' Hospital, being appointed in 1911. When the Ear and Throat Departments were combined at St. Thomas' in 1932 he was the first Surgeon-in-Charge of the combined department. One of the standard external operations for frontal sinusitis is known in this country by his name, and as long as external frontal sinus operations are performed examinees will have to know his name. He was one of the earliest otolaryngological surgeons in this country, and did much to raise the status of the speciality to respectability in the eyes of the surgical world. We owe him a great debt for this alone.

It is not our function to enumerate all the contributions made by Walter Howarth to Otolaryngology, nor to list the important positions in the speciality held by him during a remarkably long and fruitful working life. We can only express our sincere regret that he will no longer direct the fortunes of the Journal.

We, his successors, hope that we can maintain the high standards, professional and ethical, set by him, and if we can achieve this hope the immediate future of the Journal is secure.

The continued success of the Journal is of great importance to British Otolaryngology. It is owned by otolaryngologists; it does not pay dividends; it is independent of any professional organization; and it tries to serve the speciality. Walter Howarth guarded its independence with great integrity. His successors will try to maintain its position.

For most subscribers this issue will be the first to be delivered to them without Walter Howarth's name on the title page. There are relatively few present subscribers who subscribed while Logan Turner was editor. It is indeed a change in the established order. During this time, there have been many changes in the title page and the one constant feature has been "Edited by Walter Howarth". Now this has changed. His successor was trained at King's College Hospital, and then transferred to St. Thomas', where he came under the influence of Walter Howarth. He then succeeded him on the staff of St. Thomas'. Many years, and a war, later he became Assistant Editor of the Journal, when he was again educated by Walter Howarth.

The new Assistant Editor was trained at St. Thomas', as was the editor of *The Laryngoscope*, and then was appointed to the staff of the Charing Cross Hospital. He was thus only indirectly exposed to the influence of Walter Howarth. Howarth's influence at St. Thomas' was so strong, however, that the new Assistant Editor must have been affected by it.

The new editorial staff hope that they will be able to serve the subscribers as well and as conscientiously as Walter Howarth has served the Journal for thirty-two years.