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BANQUET AND TESTIMONIAL TO SIR FELIX SEMON.

IN our April number we drew the attention of our readers to the steps that were being taken for offering Sir Felix Semon a testimony as to the esteem in which his work for the benefit of laryngology was held by those who were best able to judge of it. All will be pleased to learn that the activity of those who have undertaken the arrangement of the function has been rewarded with success, and in the words of the *British Medical Journal*, July 10, 1909, "The retirement of Sir Felix Semon from active practice was made the occasion of a formal farewell ceremony such as has never to our knowledge been accorded to a member of the medical profession. The movement, as was fitting, had its origin among his brother specialists, but not a few members of the general profession and a large number of persons distinguished in the social, artistic, and musical world joined in doing honour to the man who has so long been the standard-bearer of laryngology in this country."

On the occasion of the banquet, which took place at the Whitehall Rooms, Hotel Metropole, on July 2, Mr. Butlin (now President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England), in proposing the health of Sir Felix Semon, gave to those present an interesting and appreciative account of the biography of our illustrious *confrère*, which is naturally better known to our readers than to many of the distinguished company who were present on that occasion.

The Secretary, Dr. H. J. Davis, made the gratifying statement that subscriptions to the testimonial had so far amounted to up-

wards of £1200, the subscription list not yet being closed; it will thus be seen that the means are provided for carrying out the proposed intention of endowing a lectureship or scholarship in laryngology of the value of about £50 a year or £100 every two years. This form of testimonial was the one most congenial to Sir Felix, and we trust that it may be the means of encouraging some of our younger laryngologists to bring forward the results of original investigations, or to our older ones to formulate definitely from time to time the crystallised results of their experience, not so much for the honorarium attached as for the distinction of carrying out such a desirable piece of work. We understand that it is still uncertain to what body it will be entrusted, such as the University of London, the Royal Society of Medicine, or one of the Royal Colleges, either of Surgeons or Physicians. Sir Felix is an honoured Fellow of the last, and if the lectureship (should it be such) were to be delivered under the ægis of the Royal College of Physicians, we anticipate that universal satisfaction would be felt.

Among those who came from a distance to be present at the banquet we must especially mention Dr. Birkett, of Montreal, to whom was committed the agreeable task of presenting to Lady Semon a little souvenir of the occasion in the form of a diamond and pearl pendant offered by the laryngologists. Dr. Finder, Sir Felix Semon's successor in the editorship of the *Centralblatt für Laryngologie*, came in the name of the Laryngological Society of Berlin to express its sincere good wishes to its honorary member, Sir Felix Semon, and to Lady Semon.

Dr. Dundas Grant, as President of the Laryngological Section of the Royal Society of Medicine and Chairman of the Executive Committee for the arrangement of the testimonial and banquet, offered for Sir Felix Semon's acceptance on behalf of the laryngologists an album containing a large number of their photographs.

It need hardly be said that Sir Felix was in his heartiest mood, and made a speech in reply containing some interesting and amusing experiences from the earlier part of his life in London.

Among the very valuable contributions to laryngology made by Sir Felix Semon, we may note particularly the original investigations into the innervation of the larynx, carried out in co-operation with Sir Victor Horsley, the statement of the law as to the proclivity of the abductor fibres to degeneration before those for adduction, and the collective investigation as to the tendency of simple intra-laryngeal growths to become malignant, and the possible agency of intra-laryngeal manipulation in bringing this

about. Perhaps his crowning work was the practice and advocacy of early extirpation of intra-laryngeal carcinoma by means of thyrotomy, in which Mr. Butlin's guidance in the earlier stages of the work was of so much value to him.

Sir Felix Semon has always been an able controversialist, and in some instances his powers of dialectic and his possession of "the courage of his opinions" have naturally excited some antagonism on the part of those with whom he was in controversy, especially in relation to some of the more sensational aspects of progressive rhinology, but in the out-standing works to which we have referred above he has undoubtedly carried conviction captive. These works will be an enduring memorial, and we scarcely see any possibility of their material modification in spite of whatever novelties the advance of human knowledge and research may bring forth.

Our contemporary, the international *Centralblatt für Laryngologie*, was founded by Sir Felix Semon and edited by him for nearly five and twenty years, and it is with the heartiest goodwill that we wish his successor, Dr. Finder, as great and even greater success in his editorship of the *Centralblatt* than has been obtained by his illustrious predecessor.

One of the most interesting mementoes of the banquet is the striking picture of Sir Felix drawn for the *menu* by his friend Sir Hubert von Herkomer, and we have to tender to Sir Hubert our best thanks for permission to reproduce it in this number of the JOURN. OF LARYNGOL., RHINOL., AND OTOL. Sir Hubert has made a very generous offer to paint a three-quarter size portrait of any sitter for the fee of £600, the whole of which sum he is prepared to give to the testimonial to Sir Felix. It is to be hoped that this opportunity of increasing the endowment of the lectureship may not be lost, and that someone interested in Sir Felix's work and in the progress of laryngology, as well as desirous of having a portrait by such a distinguished artist, will be found.

In the meantime we can only offer our hearty congratulations to Sir Felix on being able to retire from the storm and stress of professional work while still able to enjoy the various aspects of life—science, travel, art, sport, etc.—for which his many-sided nature is so well adapted.