

OBITUARY

R. NORRIS WOLFENDEN.

DR R. NORRIS WOLFENDEN, one of the Founders, in 1887, of the *Journal of Laryngology and Otology*, has passed away at the age of 72 after a full, useful and, as we sincerely believe, happy life. He was a native of Lancashire, and received his education at Owens College, Manchester, and at Cambridge University; then at St Bartholomew's and the London Hospitals, at the latter of which he was Senior Resident Physician.

His scientific abilities, apart from clinical work, made him a suitable Lecturer on Physiology, a position to which he was elected, in 1880, at the Charing Cross Hospital. It may be recalled that he demonstrated the use of various newly-devised forms of physiological apparatus at the Annual Conversazione.

Among other appointments he held those of Physician to the Golden Square Hospital for Diseases of the Throat, the West End Hospital for Diseases of the Nervous System, and the North-west London Hospital. He was also a member of numerous non-medical scientific Societies.

As an editor he took a very active part in the development and maintenance of the *Journal of Laryngology and Otology*, the earlier volumes containing many contributions from his pen. Among them may be noted original articles on "Exophthalmic Goitre" (in which he laid great stress on the diagnostic value of lowered resistance of the body to galvanic currents), "Aerial Bronchocele," "Malignant Disease of the Larynx," "Tuberculous Laryngitis and the Bacteriology of the Throat." These articles, as well as his extraordinarily detailed and critical abstracts, give evidence of the vigour and thoroughness which characterised his work in its various directions.

Wolfenden's name is identified with a method of swallowing liquids in cases of tuberculous ulceration of the larynx, in which, on account of pain, drinking has become practically impossible. His first publication on this subject appeared in *The Lancet* of 2nd July 1887, and it was quoted in this *Journal*, vol. i., p. 317. It is not too much to say that the method has been found a blessing to many sufferers and, as yet, no better means of relief in cases of regurgitation of liquid into the larynx has been found. "Wolfenden's Method" came to stay. It is described with laudation by Sir Felix Semon in *Heymann's Handbuch*, vol. i., p. 653.

Being well provided with this world's goods he was able, when it was his pleasure, to retire from the active practice of his profession;

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but this was not with him a reason for indulging in the *dolce far niente*, as he threw himself into the study of marine zoology. Eventually he found an outlet for his energy in fruit-growing, and he studied it enthusiastically in Canada, where he ended his days.

One of his many-sided interests was a love of music, an art in which he excelled. He showed himself a skilful conductor when he organised an orchestra in the London Hospital. A late physician to that institution expressed the opinion that he was a good man "in spite of his being a musician." He translated and annotated Joal's work on *Respiration in Singing*.

His force of character showed itself in his writings and his oral communications, and as a confidential associate of Sir Morell Mackenzie in the care of the German Crown Prince, when, in this country, Wolfenden bore himself manfully in the controversial discussions in which he was involved. A certain amount of pride with a touch of arrogance gave him an air of distinction which was not unbecoming; his impatience at contradiction associated with a tendency to express a difference of opinion, made things sometimes a little difficult for his colleagues. His quiet qualities, however, far outweighed this little defect, and anyone who dips into the earlier volumes of the *Journal* will realise that he was a strong man, and that he took a most important part in the advancement of the knowledge of scientific laryngology among English-speaking people.

JAMES DUNDAS-GRANT.

GENERAL NOTES

ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE,

1 Wimpole Street, London, W. 1.

Section of Laryngology.—*President*, Andrew Wylie, M.D. *Hon. Secretaries*, Norman Patterson, F.R.C.S., 82 Portland Place, London, W. 1, and W. M. Mollison, Ch.M., 23 Devonshire Place, London, W. 1.

The next Meeting of the Section will be held on Friday, 3rd December, at 5 P.M. Members who are desirous of showing patients or specimens are requested to give notice to the *Senior Hon. Secretary*, along with a short précis stating the more important facts.

Section of Otology.—*President*, Dan McKenzie, M.D. *Hon. Secretaries*, T. B. Layton, D.S.O., M.S., 10 Welbeck Street, London, W. 1, and Alexander R. Tweedie, F.R.C.S., 14 Oxford Street, Nottingham.

The next Meeting of the Section will be held on Saturday, 4th December, at 10.30 A.M. Members who are desirous of showing patients or specimens are requested to give notice to the *Senior Hon. Secretary*, along with a short précis stating the more important facts.