

OBITUARY

HUNTER F. TOD, M.A., M.D., B.Ch. (Cantab.), F.R.C.S. (Eng.)

President of the Section of Otology, Royal Society of Medicine ; Senior Surgeon to the Ear, Nose, and Throat Department, London Hospital ; Lecturer in Aural Surgery, London Hospital Medical School.

THE death of Mr Hunter Tod on 13th January, at the early age of fifty-two, following a long and distressing illness borne with great courage, has not only left a gap in the ranks of British Otologists which it will be difficult to fill, but it has also caused a severe blow to a large number of friends and colleagues who held him in the most affectionate esteem.

Hunter Tod was born in 1871, the second son of the late Mr David Tod, J.P., of Eastwood Park and Hartfield, Renfrewshire, N.B. He was educated at Clifton College and at Trinity College, Cambridge, and received his medical training at the London Hospital. In 1892, he took the degree of B.A. (Cantab.) with First Class Honours in Natural Science, followed, in 1896, by the M.A., M.B., B.Ch. (Cantab.), and the M.R.C.S., and L.R.C.P., London. His career at the London Hospital as a student was a successful one, for he won the Surgical Scholarship in 1895, and was House-Surgeon under Sir Frederick Eve, and House-Physician under Sir Stephen Mackenzie. In 1898, he received the diploma of F.R.C.S. (Eng.), and, in 1907, the M.D. (Cantab.).

Having determined to take up Aural Surgery as a specialty, he started by studying for a year at Halle, following which he became Resident Medical Officer to the Throat Hospital, Golden Square. This was followed by a further and prolonged course of study at Leipzig, Vienna, and Berlin. Returning to London in 1901, he was appointed Assistant Aural Surgeon to the London Hospital, and, a few months later, he became Surgeon to the Throat and Ear Department at the Children's Hospital, Paddington Green. Within two years he was appointed Aural Surgeon to the London Hospital, which appointment he held up to the time of his death, his term of office having been extended as a special honour.

At the time of his death he was President of the Section of Otology, Royal Society of Medicine, and Lecturer in Aural Surgery in the London Hospital Medical School. He had been Examiner in Aural Surgery to the Royal Army Medical College, and a Member of the Special Aural Board of the Ministry of Pensions.

When he commenced his career at the London Hospital, scientific Otology, as understood at the present day, did not exist, and it was his enthusiasm, perseverance, and energy which placed the specialty—in

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that hospital—in its present flourishing and scientific position. In this respect Otology owes a great debt to him.

Besides a large private practice, Hunter Tod had a wide circle of friends who deeply mourn his untimely end. To his patients he gave great confidence and encouragement, which could be attributed to his sound knowledge and skill. To his friends and acquaintances his cheery optimistic character will always be remembered with the most affectionate regard, for, wherever he went, he shed a brightness and happiness amongst those with whom he came in contact.

All who have had the opportunity of watching his work were impressed with his acumen, and with the manipulative skill which he displayed. As a diagnostician his opinion was not only welcomed, but sought after by a wide circle of the profession.

One of his colleagues writes:—"Of Hunter Tod's judicious and eminently practical mind we find ample evidence in his contributions to the literature of Otology, especially in those giving the results of his experience in the Surgery of the Ear—of the intracranial complications of middle-ear disease. Only a few months before his untimely death he published some of the results of his wide experience of lateral sinus thrombosis. He showed that the high percentage of recoveries depended firstly on the early recognition of this, at one time, invariably fatal complication. His keenness for organising and improving the teaching of aural surgery, with the object of promoting more efficient treatment for patients suffering from ear disease, was well known within and without the walls of the London Hospital. Not only did he press for more beds for aural patients, and for the compulsory attendance of students so that they should become acquainted with the methods of overcoming the risks and dangers of neglecting ear diseases, but he also urged his confrères in other hospitals to do the same."

He was the first to perform and exhibit in this country a case of submucous resection of the nasal septum.

Hunter Tod was an enthusiastic and prominent Freemason. W. Bro. William Hill, P.G.D., says that Hunter Tod was initiated in the Isaac Newton Lodge when an undergraduate at Cambridge, nearly thirty years ago; he joined the Earl of Mornington Lodge on coming to London; subsequently he was a Founder, P.M., and Treasurer of the London Hospital Lodge and of the old Cliftonian Lodge, and he was a Founder and P.Z. of the Public Schools Chapter. On the occasion of the special Grand Lodge Meeting at the Albert Hall last October, when the Prince of Wales was invested Senior Grand Warden, Bro. Tod was given the rank of Past Senior Grand Deacon, and he was made Past Principal Sojourner Grand Chapter. He had acted as Steward to all the Masonic Charities.

An old University friend and colleague writes:—"I knew him

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first as an undergraduate at Trinity College, Cambridge, and afterwards as a student at the London Hospital. It is difficult in a few words to give an adequate picture of his most attractive personality. Small in stature but very neatly built, he played half back at Rugby football for Trinity, and for the London Hospital, and played a most fearless and aggressive game. He was exceedingly good company, and his air of impish—I had almost written impudent—self-assurance, was chiefly put on to raise a laugh. He was fundamentally entirely devoid of ‘side.’ ‘Jinks,’ as all his friends affectionately called him, was interested in every side of life. If one day his tutor had to censure him for his participation in a ‘rigger rag,’ he would be congratulating him very shortly on his ‘first’ in the Tripos. Although he achieved great professional distinction, due to his intellect, industry, honesty and personal charm, he always remained ‘Jinks,’ the light-hearted jester to his old friends.”

By many of his confrères in the West End he was known by perhaps the more dignified sobriquet “the Hunter.”

Viscount Knutsford (Chairman of the London Hospital) adds the following tribute to his memory:—“I have known him ever since he first entered the Hospital when he got a surgical scholarship in 1895, and during the whole of that time Hunter Tod was peculiarly noted for his extraordinary patience and gentleness. He was a particularly good mastoid operator—so his colleagues have often told me—and he took a personal pride in lessening the painful after-dressings. It may seem to be an exaggeration to say that everybody loved him, but I have no words to convey my feelings. He faced his death as he faced everything in life, with cheerful bravery and pluck.”

A colleague at the London Hospital writes:—“When one has been the intimate friend of a man for over thirty years—and has, moreover, grown up and graduated successively with him through the stages of Student, Resident, and Staff—it is difficult in a few words to do justice to a man like Hunter Tod. As a student ‘Jinks,’ as he was universally known, and will always be affectionately remembered, was the life of his year. Brimming over with high spirits and vitality, in work and in play alike, he knew and showed the zest of living. Possessing a brain of remarkable quickness, unusually retentive memory, and surprising powers of concentration, examinations had no terrors for him, and his Hospital career continued the brilliance of his University days.

“As a Hospital Resident his colleagues will never forget his indefatigable cheeriness and unfailing high spirits, and looking back one sees how the irresponsible student developed apace as he shouldered life’s responsibilities. There never could be any doubt that ‘Jinks’ would succeed in whatever he undertook, and his gaiety failed to cloak an earnestness which always commanded success. Tod



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did nothing by halves. When he meant work, nothing would tempt him away; at other times, he would slack and play as to the manner born. He early showed marked surgical abilities, and threw himself whole-heartedly into the special branch of Surgery which he made his life work. He was a rapid, expert operator—to see him do a ‘mastoid’ was to watch a master of his craft. As a Staff colleague in later years his enthusiasm for his Department was unbounded, and he was always fighting for its improvement. He was whole-hearted in his methods, and spared neither friend nor foe. But we all loved him. ‘Jinks’ leaves a blank we shall find it very hard to fill.”

Another colleague at the London Hospital writes :—“Hunter Tod was connected with the London Hospital for close on thirty years. He came here as a student on leaving Cambridge. After a short time on the Assistant Staff he served as Senior Aural Surgeon for twenty years, and had just had his term of office extended for another five years, and there also he died! He was thus in every sense a ‘London’ man, and his affection for the Hospital, and his loyalty were amongst the mainsprings of his life. His zeal for his own Special Department was unbounded, and he was tireless in his efforts to extend its scope, and promote its efficiency; indeed, his incessant demands for an increase of beds became almost a standing joke between him and his colleagues when the members of the Staff met in Council. Others are more competent to speak of his skill as an operator in his chosen branch, but as one who only came in professional contact with him in consultation over cases on the boundary-line between Medicine and Surgery, the writer can testify to the general trustworthiness of his opinion, and the soundness of his judgment. Yet it is probable that he did not always get full credit for his extensive and accurate knowledge. Like one of the characters in *The Wrong Box* he thought that there was ‘nothing like a little judicious levity.’ This humorous way of looking at things along with a certain flippancy of manner, at times tended to conceal from those who did not know him well, his great reserves of clinical experience. But it was just those characteristics which endeared him more to his colleagues and friends. Never was there a more clubbable man, or one who could be better company, and everyone knew ‘Jinks’—from the Chairman to the most junior porter. He derived from his Scottish birth a dry sense of humour, and a gift of delicate sarcasm, whilst his English education had smoothed away the surface asperities apt to be met with in those who come from North of the Tweed. Scottish also in his sincerity of speech and deed, he was almost too honest to please some type of patient, and if his outspokenness occasionally gave offence in debate he was always the first to smooth any ruffled feelings, and never cherishing a grudge. Like many little men, Hunter Tod had a great and courageous heart, and those who were privileged to witness the bravery with which he

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awaited the slow-footed approach of inevitable death, recognised that he was indeed—in the words inscribed on the wreath laid on his grave by his colleagues—a very gallant gentleman, whose untimely removal has cast a gloom over the Hospital he so greatly loved.”

The *Lancet* referring to his distinguished career, says :—“It is not as a great pioneer, but as a teacher and practitioner of Aural Surgery, with a lovable personality, whose work and example did much to raise and nothing to lower the highest ideals of his profession, that he will be remembered and missed.”

He was the author of a manual of *Diseases of the Ear*, published in 1907, and he contributed articles on “Diseases of the External Auditory Canal and Tympanic Membrane” in Clifford Allbutt’s *System of Medicine*, 1908; “Operations upon the Ear” in Burghard’s *System of Operative Surgery*; “Acute Inflammation of the Middle Ear” in Latham and English’s *System of Treatment*, 1912; “Diseases of the Tympanic Membrane, Adenoids, and Nasal Obstruction” for the *Practical Encyclopædia of Medicine and Surgery*.

He leaves a widow, the eldest daughter of Dr Stanley Rendall, of Chantmerle, Aix-les-Bains, a son and three daughters.

A Memorial Service was held at St Marylebone Parish Church on the 26th January, which was attended by Viscount Knutsford (Chairman of the London Hospital), who read the Lesson, and by many of his colleagues on the Staff of the London Hospital. There was also a large and representative gathering of his specialist colleagues, and many members of the nursing profession.

IRWIN MOORE.

GENERAL NOTES

ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE,
1 Wimpole Street, London, W.1.

Section of Otology—Chairman, Sir Charles Ballance, K.C.M.G. *Hon. Secretaries*, F. J. Cleminson, M.Ch., and Archer Ryland, F.R.C.S. Ed. The next Meeting of the Section will be held on Friday, 16th March, at 5 P.M.

Members intending to show cases or specimens are requested to give notice of the same to the Hon. Senior Secretary, Mr F. J. Cleminson, 32 Harley Street, London, W.1, at least twelve days before the date of the Meeting.

Section of Laryngology—President, Charles A. Parker, F.R.C.S. Ed. *Hon. Secretaries*, T. B. Layton, D.S.O., M.S., and J. F. O’Malley, F.R.C.S. The Annual Meeting of the Section will be held on Friday, 4th May, at 4.45 P.M.