

OBITUARY

Sir JOHN WALTON BROWNE, Knt., D.L., M.D., LL.D.

Consulting Surgeon, The Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast.

IT is with sincere regret we have to record the death of Sir John Walton Browne, who passed away in his sleep on the morning of 19th December 1923, after a short illness. He was born on the 5th October 1845 in Belfast, where his father, Dr S. Browne, R.N., J.P., a former mayor of the city, founded, with the help of some generous friends, the Ophthalmic Hospital in Great Victoria Street.

Sir Walton received his early education at Dr Russel's private academy. He afterwards entered the local college and graduated in Arts and Medicine. His medical studies were continued in Dublin, London, and Vienna, and, for the rest of his life, he practised his profession in his native city, where he was loved and respected.

For the long period of thirty-seven years, he served on the staff of the Royal Victoria Hospital. No more devoted friend than he could any hospital have had. He was beloved by hosts of patients, students, and nurses. His breezy manner and good-natured humour were appreciated by all who knew him.

During his professional career, I think one can safely say that he never made an enemy, and every student who was trained under his guidance always remembered him, in after years, with the kindest recollections.

Walton Browne was a prominent Freemason and a member of Chap. 8 of the Prince Masons of Ireland.

His reputation was based on sound scientific knowledge, a broad experience, and a fund of sound common sense. His professional skill in elucidating an obscure surgical case was recognised universally, and appreciated as more than ordinary. During the period of the Great War his loyalty and devotion were shown by the great amount of extra work which, at an advanced age, he undertook in the Ophthalmic Hospital in order to free the younger members on the staff for service abroad. Freely spending himself for the benefit of his patients, he carried out work of the greatest value in the interests of his country.

Dr Wiclif M'Cready, a colleague in the Belfast Ophthalmic Hospital, writes: "With the passing of Sir Walton Browne one of the oldest landmarks of the medical world in Northern Ireland has been removed. Every doctor knew Sir Walton and he knew all of them. He was 'so clear in his great office,' so generous, so tactful

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in his dealings, that he held to the last the friendship and esteem of all the Fraternity, old and young.

“Former students of his, returning to Belfast even after forty years’ absence, were sure to visit their old chief. Many of them relate with gratitude how much they owe to his help and encouragement.

“It is a tribute to his wonderful vitality that in the last year of the war he treated single handed 7000 cases in his hospital in Great Victoria Street. His remarkable personality will never be forgotten by those of us who enjoyed the privilege of his intimate friendship.”

Honours were freely bestowed on him and especially were his friends delighted, when His Gracious Majesty thought fit to invest him with the dignity of Knighthood on the occasion of his visit to Belfast to open the Northern Parliament.

Sir Walton’s life was one of great usefulness and unselfishness, and now that he has entered into his rest, the sympathy of the entire community goes out to his only daughter, Mrs Young, and his brother, Dr S. Browne, R.N., in their great bereavement.

H. HANNA.

GENERAL NOTES

ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE,

1 Wimpole Street, London, W. 1.

Section of Laryngology—President, Mr H. J. Banks-Davis, F.R.C.P.—*Hon. Secretaries*, Mr J. F. O’Malley, F.R.C.S., and Mr E. D. D. Davis, F.R.C.S.

The next Meeting of the Section will be held on Friday, 7th March, at 4.45 P.M. Members who are desirous of showing patients and specimens should give notice of the same to the *Senior Hon. Secretary*, Mr J. F. O’Malley, 6 Upper Wimpole Street, London, W. 1., at least twelve days before the Meeting.

Section of Otology—President, Mr Sydney Scott, M.S. *Hon. Secretaries*, Mr Archer Ryland, F.R.C.S.Ed., and Mr T. H. Just, F.R.C.S.

The next Meeting of the Section will be held on Saturday, 8th March, at 10 A.M. Members proposing to read papers must send a copy of the same at least twenty-one days in advance, and those desirous of showing patients or specimens must intimate the same to the *Senior Hon. Secretary*, Mr Archer Ryland, 50 Harley Street, London, W. 1., at least twelve days before the Meeting.

During the Session 1923-24, the *Sections of Laryngology and Otology* will meet upon the following dates:—

Section of Laryngology, on Friday, 7th March, 4th April, and 2nd May (*Annual Meeting*).