



SIR ARCHIBALD GRAY

OBITUARY.

SIR ARCHIBALD GRAY, K.C.V.O., C.B.E., T.D., LL.D., M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.S.

THOUGH he had long suffered from an incapacitating illness and been unable to come to our meetings, it was nevertheless a shock to hear of Sir Archibald Gray's death on October 13th, so big a place did he fill in the minds of all of us who knew him.

In this journal, it is his services to dermatology and dermatologists that we will mainly recount.

The story begins in 1909, when, after a period of study under Jadassohn in Bern, he succeeded Radcliffe-Crocker as Physician for Diseases of the Skin at University College Hospital. He held this post for thirty-seven years, and in course of time organized a convenient and commodious out-patient department, partly shared with the Venereal Diseases Department, which at one stage included a large room for x-ray and light treatments and a "hydrotherapy" department mostly used for scabies. Moreover he secured four five-bedded wards. Rooms in the Medical School, too, were allocated to the Skin Department, which (among so many other advantages) facilitated the installing of Freudenthal from Jadassohn's clinic in the early Nazi period, and the eventual establishment of a Readership in Cutaneous Histology. Further, he collected an excellent dermatological library. No doubt Gray was better able to do all this by his holding, at various times, commanding positions in the advisory and administrative bodies of the Hospital and Medical School.

Gray looked after his patients kindly and efficiently, and had an almost photographic memory of his cases. The breadth of his knowledge and exactness of his observation made his teaching lucid and convincing.

His work at University College Hospital was of course interrupted by World War I, when, with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, R.A.M.C. (T.A.), he was attached to the General Staff at the War Office. In 1918-19, he was Consulting Dermatologist of the Army Zone, B.E.F., being mentioned in dispatches.

In 1920, he became Physician for Diseases of the Skin to the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, and held that post for fourteen years. It was here that he made his important observations on sclerema neonatorum, which he reported in a paper read at the Golden Anniversary Meeting of the American Dermatological Association at Philadelphia in 1926. He read a further paper on the subject to our Association in 1933.

His experience in paediatric dermatology was extended by his appointment as Consulting Dermatologist to Goldie Leigh Hospital, where all children with skin troubles under the care of the London County Council were collected. There he paid regular weekly visits from 1935 till 1951, together with Dr. S. Cochrane Shanks, who did x-ray epilations for ringworm, as he had also done with Gray's predecessor, J. M. H. MacLeod.

From 1924 to 1945 he was Consultant in Dermatology to the Royal Air Force, and from 1948 to 1962 Adviser in Dermatology to the Ministry of Health. The Medical Research Council, too, had help from him on several occasions, but especially his Chairmanship of the Medical Mycology Committee from 1949-1959.

The Dermatological Section of the Royal Society of Medicine owed much to him, not only directly but also through his work for the Society itself. He was already a member of the Council of the Section in 1913, and was President from 1931-33. He attended the Section meetings with great regularity as long as his health allowed. He was elected Honorary Member of the Section in 1956. His opinions on clinical cases were cogently presented and highly valued.

Gray had the good fortune in 1913 to be the Editor and one of the Secretaries of the Dermatological Section of the International Congress of Medicine held in London. It was memorable for the great discussion in the Albert Hall on the treatment and prevention of syphilis. Gray found himself among a brilliant foreign company including Darier, Fordyce, Jadassohn, Neisser, Sabouraud, Ehrlich, Ehlers, Gougerot, Hallopeau and Oppenheim. It may well be that this engendered in him his vivid interest in international co-operation. He afterwards acted as representative for Britain on the international committee which planned dermatological congresses; was Vice-President of the 8th International Congress of Dermatology at Copenhagen in 1930; and President of the 10th International Congress in London in 1952, which was a most successful and happy meeting.

His reputation abroad was shown by his election as Honorary Member of twelve foreign societies.

It is perhaps with the British Association of Dermatology that we especially identify him. The suggestion to form the Association was made by Gray in 1919, and it came into being in 1921, partly for the purpose of financially supporting and controlling the *British Journal of Dermatology*, which had been founded in 1888. Gray was Editor of the *Journal* from 1916 to 1929. He was President from 1938-39. This Association he nurtured with devotion, and it has steadily grown in size and importance, the annual meetings bringing together dermatologists from the whole of the United Kingdom and abroad in scientific and social intercourse.

The Association was fortunate in having him as Treasurer from 1940 to 1960, during which time, thanks to his skilful management, its funds rose from £1000 to £5000. In 1957, he conceived the idea of offering £2500 to the Royal College of Physicians towards the expenses of its new building in Regent's Park, on condition that a room be named the Robert Willan Room. This was accepted, and here there has already been collected, with great help from Professor Ingram, Gray's successor in the Treasurership, an original oil painting of Willan as well as manuscripts and other objects of historical interest. It is also used regularly for meetings of the Executive Committee of the Association, and other meetings. Gray was able to be present at a party at the Royal College of Physicians, held on 21 October 1965, to mark the opening of the Willan Room, an occasion to which he had been greatly looking forward.

Of at least equal importance was his pioneer work for the Institute of Dermatology. This story goes back to 1935, from which date Gray represented London University on the Governing Body of the Postgraduate Medical School at Hammersmith. The late Sir Francis Fraser told how, in the days before the Second World War, he and Gray used to take their children to the Zoo on Sunday mornings, and there the two grown-ups planned the future of postgraduate medical education, looking forward to the expansion of the School at Hammersmith into a Federation of specialist institutes. Later, with a few others, they made that recommendation to the Goodenough Committee. [Gray had been a member of the Goodenough Committee on Organization of Medical Schools from 1942 to 1944.] The British Postgraduate Medical Federation was created in 1947. In this year, Gray was appointed representative of the Senate of London University on the first Governing Body of the Federation, and remained a member till 1960. Sir Francis considered that Gray's work for the University of London and postgraduate medical education generally was of greater importance even than his services to dermatology.

During precisely the same period, viz. 1947-60, he acted as the first Chairman of the Committee of Management of the Institute of Dermatology, which had taken over the affairs of the London School of Dermatology, of which he was also Chairman. One of the urgent practical tasks was to find adequate in-patient accommodation, the old, and very inadequate, department in Uxbridge Road having been destroyed in the war. In this task, Gray was greatly assisted by his experience gained in carrying out with Dr. Andrew Topping the Survey of London Hospitals for the Ministry of Health, the

Report of which had been published in 1945. Here I would like to quote from Dr. Brian Russell's *St. John's Hospital for Diseases of the Skin, 1863-1963*: "In the formation and development of the Institute of Dermatology, Sir Archibald Gray has always been its trusted guide and friend, zealous for any action which would enhance its reputation." It was not till 1959, the year before Gray retired from the Chairmanship at the age of 80, that the Institute was officially recognized as a member of the British Postgraduate Medical Federation.

Sir Archibald's dermatological publications were marked by orderliness and a sense of history, as the following titles will show. Thus, he wrote part of the Section on skin diseases of the *Official Medical History of the [1914-1918] War*; and, together with Whitfield, he drew up the section on diseases of the skin in the Royal College of Physicians' *Nomenclature of Diseases*, 1931. The title of his Harveian Oration in 1951 (he was the first dermatologist to be a Harveian Orator) was *Dermatology from the Time of Harvey*, and that of his Prosser White Oration in 1954 was *The Founders of Modern Dermatology*. As recently as 1963 he contributed to this *Journal* an article on *Dermatologists at University College Hospital*.

Probably it is little known that he contributed continuously to *The Medical Annual* for 17 years. Finally, he wrote the valuable section on skin diseases in eight editions of Price's *Textbook of the Practice of Medicine*. In a review of the 1946 edition, it was commended as a model of how special subjects should be treated for the student and general practitioner.

Though this record has omitted much of his work outside dermatology, it is still an extraordinary sum of solid achievement.

It gave him great pleasure when, in 1963, our Association established the Archibald Gray Prize and Medal, to be awarded every five years for outstanding work in dermatology.

His last public appearance before his illness confined him to his home was at the Prosser White Oration in October 1966.

In admiration we salute his passing, and with gratitude for the rich legacy he bequeathed to us.

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