The Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery

THOMAS FAIRBANK BIRTHDAY VOLUME

“ I will never be an old man; to me old age is always fifteen years more than I am.” So it is with Thomas Fairbank who will never be old, not even within the next fifteen years. The vivacity of his spirit and the industry of his activity have kept him young all the time. It is true that this special issue of the British volume of the *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery* is a Birthday Volume commemorating eighty years of vigorous endeavour, in which every invited contributor is proud to pay respect, regard and warm affection to “ Uncle Tom ”; but all who feel so proud of him, and are so glad to have known him and been stimulated by him, expect very many more years of his friendship.

The great contribution that he has made to the advance of orthopaedic surgery through teachings and publications is acknowledged in these pages; but we must also emphasise the qualities of kindness and understanding that have made him so great a leader of young surgeons both in days of peace and days of war. Such quiet and mellowing influence is not always recognised but it represents a most important part of the life of our doyen of British orthopaedics.

There are many who have worked long and faithfully with Sir Thomas Fairbank, including especially his operating sister, private secretary and librarian, Miss B. Florence Bradbury. But a very special tribute is owed in this Birthday Volume to Lady Fairbank. Every single one of us who has known her will join in an expression of love to one who has so loved a great man that she too has made the one gift that matters in this world—the relief of suffering and anxiety and the conferment of happiness and joy upon those who need it—and who does not?

REGINALD WATSON-JONES

AN OPEN LETTER

FROM SIR ROBERT HUTCHISON, BART.

MY DEAR FAIRBANK,

So you have joined the ranks of the octogenarians! Being myself a member of that select body I should like to offer you a cordial welcome to it—*Finis coronat opus*, and I think you will find that to have exceeded the three score and ten by a decade has its compensations. It must be fully half a century since we first were colleagues at Great Ormond Street soon after your return from the South African War, and, although our paths have diverged since then and of late years I have not seen as much of you as I could have wished, yet I have followed your career with interest and admiration and have been glad to note how the promise of your early days at the Hospital for Sick Children has been so amply fulfilled. Others, better qualified than I, will describe the great work you have done in your special branch of surgery, but I should like to say, if I may, how much all of us have been inspired by the high standard of professional integrity of which you have always set an example. I join therefore most cordially in the acclamations which will greet you on your eightieth anniversary and in the hope that you will have many years yet of health and happiness in which to enjoy the high reputation and esteem you have so richly earned.

I am, my dear Fairbank, with every good wish,

Yours very sincerely,

ROBERT HUTCHISON