SIR JOHN HERBERT PARSONS
An Appreciation

BY

R. R. JAMES

"Time hath, my Lord, a wallet at his back,
Wherein he puts alms for oblivion;"

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA, ACT 3, SCENE 3.

ULYSSES, in the play, calls the wallet a "great-siz'd monster of ingratiations."

In my case the wallet holds no ingratiations; but as one gets older it naturally becomes fuller and fuller. It will, however, never be so full that I can forget all I owe to Sir John Parsons. It is now more than forty-one years since I was first introduced to him at one of the evening meetings of the Ophthalmological Society by a common friend. I have never forgotten how he said, when he was informed that I was hoping to come and work with him at Moorfields, that ophthalmology was already overfull. He must have noticed the chagrin in my looks for he quickly added: “Of course there’s always room for a good man.”

I became his clinical assistant at the end of the year 1907 and have been intimately associated with him for more than thirty years. I bear to none of the companions on life’s journey so much real, almost filial, affection as I do to Sir John Parsons. He has been a most strong Tower to British Ophthalmology and especially to the Journal, standing ever,

“Four-square to all the winds that blew.”

That he may long continue to be the Doyen of our branch of the profession is the fervent desire of all who have been associated with him.