

EDITORIAL

I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch where-thro'
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd not to shine in use!

Tennyson; Ulysses.

Almost without realising it we have reached the end of an era, and it is with great pride, tinged with a certain sadness that EYE records this by presenting this Festschrift as a tribute to our retiring editor Patrick Trevor-Roper.

There is a generation of ophthalmologists, and many others, who owe him a debt of sincerest gratitude; some of them, who have worked for him and with him both at the Westminster Hospital and at Moorfields High Holborn, are represented in this journal. All would admit to his influence – a slightly different perspective, perhaps a more liberal attitude, a love of language, a healthy disrespect for pomposity and pretension, and above all an infectious awareness that there is more to our speciality than ophthalmology alone and that some of the older values need to be taken out from time to time, dusted and put on show.

T-R has been at the centre of the stage of British Ophthalmology for nearly four decades, or rather slightly off-centre – a position that he much preferred. His sphere of influence has extended from the most junior medical student to the staff and senior colleagues of the two great hospitals that he served, (the closures of which were mercifully delayed until after his retirement, as he would not have taken these translations well), and far beyond medicine into a different world of art, music and literature.

As editor and literary advisor T-R was never high-handed or dictatorial but sought always to persuade by example. Who could not be impressed by the fluency, colour and charm of his many writings? We are reminded of his chastening advice to those who submitted articles to him – that whatever is written is meant to be read with comfort and ease no matter how scientifically learned the content.

Since 1950 he presided over the Transactions of the OSUK, which always managed to retain its uniquely British flavour without being too homely or parochial. From this has now emerged EYE, not as a phoenix, for there were never any flames let alone ashes at its transfiguration, but without doubt conceptually altered in shape and style, yet hopefully still graced with some of the old unmistakable character.

The pride in this Festschrift comes from paying tribute to a revered colleague, teacher, mentor and friend, a charming host, a fighter of just and sometimes lost causes, with a sincere hope that he will continue to guide and watch over us during the uncertain years ahead. The sadness is that when all is said and done, it is a measure of the man, that things will never be quite the same again.

Timothy ffytche