consistent hypoglycaemic action (Hugh-Jones, 1955; Sepaha and Bose, 1956). Oestrogenic hormones have been given for diabetes developing at puberty and for the diabetes found in post-menopausal women (Gessler *et al.*, 1939). Dimercaprol has been shown to reduce the blood sugar in a few diabetics, but it is unlikely that it will be used in treatment (Butterfield and Thompson, 1957). The salicylate drugs are of considerable interest. They lower the blood sugar in some diabetics (Reid *et al.*, 1957) and also appear to enhance the hypoglycaemic action of the sulphonamide derivatives (Stowers *et al.*, 1958).

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DR. ELLIOTT JOSLIN: A BIRTHDAY TRIBUTE

Written at the special invitation of the B.M.J. by

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Elliott Proctor Joslin, dean of the American medical profession and authority extraordinary on diabetes to a considerable proportion of the civilized world, will celebrate his ninetieth birthday on June 6. That is, his devoted friends, relatives, associates, and admirers will presumably press some sort of a celebration on him; he will probably spend at least part of the day in his office, attending to business as usual.

Dr. Joslin was born these fourscore and ten years ago in the town of Oxford, Massachusetts. As a boy, it has been reported, he spent his spare hours working in his father's shoe factory putting laces into shoes at six cents per 60 pairs. The inflationary sums thus amassed were not spent riotously, however; his father insisted that they be put into the savings bank, where they still remain. Frugal in his personal life, Dr. Joslin is such a ready giver in good causes that his friends fear his coming to want if old age ever overtakes him. Perhaps the interest on the pennies in the bank will yet serve to rescue him.

From the academy in the neighbouring town of Leicester Elliott went to Yale College and then to Harvard Medical School, then to the Massachusetts General Hospital for an internship. It was here, in 1893, as a student, that he acquired his interest in diabetes through his care of Mary Higgins.

the first case in his series of over 50,000 diabetic patients. A spare person, one of Dr. Joslin's aphorisms is that people who run 10 to the ton are most likely to acquire diabetes. Dr. Joslin was one of the first to recognize the achievement of Banting and Best in Macleod's Canadian laboratory in 1922, and he was the first to use insulin in his own country.

Years ago he started the custom of giving a bronze medal to each of his diabetic patients who exceeded the normal life expectancy (there have been over 2,000 of them) and a gold medal to those who more than doubled it.

A gold medal recipient was George F. Baker, then president of the First National Bank of New York, whose award was bread upon the waters, for he eventually left a quarter million dollars for the Baker Diabetic Clinic at the New England Deaconess Hospital in Boston. The frieze by Malvina Hoffman on the new Joslin Clinic building opened last year at the Deaconess Hospital, representing the history of medicine, starts with Imhotep and ends with the late George Richards Minot, the diabetic physician of Boston who received the Nobel Prize for his part in discovering the liver treatment for pernicious anaemia. He was another of the 50,000 who owed to Dr. Joslin and his associates the renewed capacity to carry on.