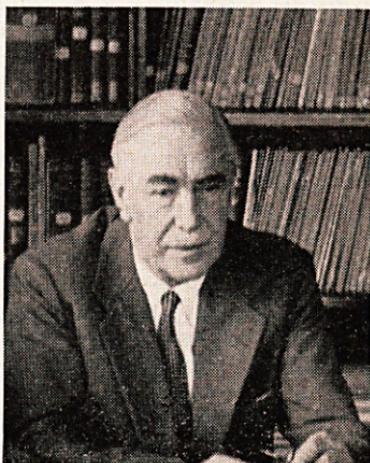


OBITUARY

The Hon. W. S. Maclay, C.B., O.B.E., M.D., F.R.C.P., D.T.M. & H., D.P.M.



By courtesy "The Times"

Walter Maclay was intensely human with a twinkle in his eye and a sense of humour. He was essentially a good companion who understood the use of communication, and his artistic nature included the art of gracious living. One of my happiest memories of him is at one of the N.A.M.H.'s courses, where he had to give a lecture just at the time the Royal Commission Report was out, with its many recommendations and new ideas of a controversial nature for those conservative in outlook and anxious about change.

During dinner he said he had prepared nothing, and was apprehensive as he realised his audience expected a blue-print with all the answers. With that famous twinkle he added: "I expect to make a bad speech as I cannot give them what they want". He got up and, in that quiet humble way, he made the best speech I ever heard him make, without a note. He played the part of an old reactionary Medical Superintendent sitting before the fire with his slippers on, and took up point after point of the Report, giving reasons as to why it was unworkable in his hospital. It was charmingly done and very clever, and the cap fitted his audience so well that it brought down the house. They knew he was human and understood their difficulties, but his words conveyed the urgency of a changed attitude, and the importance of the great Act that was to come.

He found time for many activities outside his department and his unfailing support for the N.A.M.H., the Mental Health Research Fund and the World Federation for Mental Health showed appreciation of team work between statutory and voluntary bodies and between professionals and laymen. He mixed well with foreigners of all races and colours, and just by being himself, gave courage to so many in all parts of the world he visited to carry on their work for better conditions for the mentally ill and understanding of mental health. His brilliant address at the memorial service for T. P. Rees will be remembered by all who heard it. So will the reading by Lord Feversham from "Pilgrim's Progress", which could so easily be a fitting farewell to all three men, who gave such Valiant-for-Truth service to mental health.

"My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me that I have fought His battles who now will be my rewarder".
"... So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side".

P. N.