OBITUARY

LIONEL BEECHER SOMERVILLE-LARGE, 1901–1966

For those who knew him well, no empty phrases could do justice to the many brilliant facets in the character of this remarkable man. For those who knew him only slightly, or not at all, it is scarcely possible to create an accurate image of so colourful an individual. His popularity in Great Britain dated back to his time as House Surgeon at Moorfields and increased as the years progressed, culminating in his election as President of the Ophthalmological Society of the United Kingdom in 1962. His four years of self-sacrificing war service in India were for him a period of mixed experiences.

However highly he may have been esteemed outside Ireland, it was only in his own country that his true worth could be fully appreciated. He was a Fellow of the Royal Irish Academy, a member of the Society of Irish Military History, and had many other literary, archaeological, and artistic associations. Only this year he was elected an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, the first ophthalmologist to be thus honoured. He endowed an Award, called by his name, to enable younger Irish ophthalmologists to spend some weeks abroad every year, reporting their experiences on their return. He re-organized, and indeed virtually refounded, the library in the Eye and Ear Hospital in Dublin, and founded the Irish Faculty of Ophthalmology.

His interests were many. He could lecture equally entrancingly on such varied subjects as “The Islands of Greece”, “The Religions of India”, “The Ruined Castles of West Cork”, and “Spectacles depicted in the Paintings of the Old Masters”, and his mastery of his subject was such that he carried his audience along on the wave of his own enthusiasm. It is hard to say whether he was loved more by his colleagues or by his patients. The latter, of whom there were a multitude, appreciated his sympathy, his wise counsel, and his surgical skill. At every ophthalmological meeting held near Dublin, his lovely home was the scene of joyous reunion and, indeed, it could scarcely be otherwise, for here his happiest hours were spent, with a wife and daughter who saw to it that no cares or worries should follow him there. To them our deepest sympathy must be extended. He was a wonderful host, and an equally delightful guest, and his great gaiety and charm persisted in spite of a constitution never very robust.

One is very conscious that in attempting to paint a picture of this talented, charming and very lovable individual, many shades and many colours have been omitted, but each one of us who knew him will feel

“He was a man, take him for all in all.
I shall not look upon his like again”.

L. E. W.

DR. WILHELM ROHRSCHNEIDER

Our readers will be sad to learn that Wilhelm Rohrschneider, emeritus Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Munich, has died in his 72nd year.