

OBITUARY

Dr. J. A. A. Mekelburg died suddenly at London Airport on July 4, 1959. He had returned from a holiday in Northern Ireland after enjoying, with characteristic enthusiasm, the Belfast meeting of the Association of Industrial Medical Officers. He died as he would have wished, briefly and while still at work.

John (his full name was Johannes) Mekelburg was born in South Africa in 1899. He was educated at South African College School and Cape Town University. In 1919 he came to England and qualified in 1925 from Guy's Hospital. He settled in general practice at Forest Gate, London, where he worked until 1939, when he became medical officer to Messrs. Peek Frean and Company in Bermondsey. With this work he combined the duties of safety officer and developed an exemplary industrial medical service. His natural kindness as doctor, friend, and wise counsellor brought help and relief to many employees and colleagues at difficult times.

John Mekelburg was a man of many interests. He was an international smallbore shot and won many prizes at Bisley, an enthusiastic collector of stamps, and a good amateur photographer. In 1957, with his wife and daughters, he was happily able to visit South Africa and enjoy the familiar places of his youth. The coloured slides he took on this journey were enjoyed by many friends. He was an active member of the Royal Society

for the Prevention of Accidents and made a considerable contribution to the work of the Society.

John Mekelburg's heart was devoted to the Association of Industrial Medical Officers. He became Honorary Secretary of the Association in 1949 and was tireless in his personal efforts to secure its expansion and wider recognition. In 1949 the Association had 500 members and it was Mekelburg's ambition, which was realized in 1958, to increase this number to 1,000. He then gave up the post of Honorary Secretary to undertake a less arduous task as Business Manager of the Transactions. This was particularly appropriate for it was his enthusiasm that inspired the publication of the Quarterly Bulletin of the Association, the first number of which was published in September 1948. From this newsletter grew the Transactions. These are matters of history which will not be forgotten. But we shall not forget also the high integrity and dedication of John Mekelburg to industrial medicine. To his friends he was kindly, sincere, and loyal, a colleague whom we shall sadly miss. John's life was well and fully lived; his death will be felt as a personal loss by all his colleagues. Our sympathy goes to his widow and two daughters, who often accompanied him to the Association meetings he enjoyed so much.

L. G. NORMAN

