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OBITUARY

WILLIAM PERMEWAN, M.D. Lond., F.R.C.S. ENG., J.P.

By the death of Dr. W. Permewan on March 9th, at the age of 61, the medical profession has lost a member who distinguished himself in many departments of life.

William Permewan came of a Cornish family, and was educated at University College, London, where he graduated in medicine in 1886. After holding an appointment as surgeon to the Miners' Hospital, Redruth, he went to Liverpool as house surgeon to the David Lewis Northern Hospital. Taking his M.D. in 1888, he became F.R.C.S. in the following year, and in 1892 took the D.P.H. at Cambridge. It was at this time he began to interest himself in laryngology, and afterwards he became aural surgeon to the Royal Southern Hospital and the Southport Infirmary, and in 1914 lecturer in laryngology in the University of Liverpool. Dr. Permewan contributed numerous articles on diseases of the throat and ear to medical journals, and was a vice-president of the Liverpool Medical Institution. In his own city, however, he was perhaps best known for his interest in politics and municipal affairs. From 1901-07 he represented Abercromby Ward on the City Council and served on several of the Council's committees. In 1910 he fought one of the keenest political battles in the history of Liverpool against Mr. F. E. Smith (now Lord Birkenhead), who was standing in the Unionist interest. Dr. Permewan was then a Liberal and Home Ruler and wrote a good deal on political subjects. His articles in the *Fortnightly Review* attracted attention, and in his political contributions he was usually accurate in gauging the trend of public opinion, though in his two attempts to enter the House of Commons he was unfortunate in the selection of a constituency. Of late years he came to the conclusion that a strong Conservative Government was needed to counteract the Socialist tendencies of the day, and he played a prominent part on the Conservative side in recent elections.

"Dr. Permewan", writes Sir James Barr, who has sent us many intimate details of his friend's life, "was a brilliant conversationalist, an excellent debater, and a man of great literary talent. He had a splendid voice, and if he had taken up music as a profession he might easily have been a distinguished operatic singer; his vocal power and manner would soon have placed him in the front rank."

During the war Dr. Permewan was attached to the 1st Western General Hospital. In 1901 he married a sister of Sir Max Muspratt, and the sympathy felt by his friends for his widow and son is greatly deepened by the fact that his brilliant daughter died of appendicitis only seven weeks before him.

