

## CHARLES THEODORE EWART.

CLINICAL psychiatry has lost a devoted as well as an able and interesting personality by the death of Dr. Ewart. It is unspeakably sad that he should have been called away from the work of his life, just as he was happily enjoying the climax of his ambition, for which he had long waited and which, when at last attained, he maintained with honour and the utmost credit, *vis.* the post of Medical Superintendent of the London County Council's large asylum at Claybury, with nearly 3,000 beds, and to which he was temporarily appointed only last September. All who knew Ewart respected his loyalty, the love that he had for the work of tending the insane, his anxiety for their comfort and welfare, as well as his great reserve of perseverance and patience. It is not too much to say that no man was ever more respected by the staff nor more loved by his patients for the special qualities which make a successful medical officer of a large institution. Those who knew Ewart never failed to realise his great tenderness in speech and action, for sympathy was in the nether springs of his nature. He never turned a deaf ear to the most trivial complaint, even when made by the most unreasonable of his patients, and he readily gave an interview to the most unamenable and perturbing spirit. He regarded his patients as his friends and he gave of his best freely to serve their interests. The writer knew no medical officer who so readily responded or who gave his time so unstintedly to "interviews with friends" in order to reassure anxious relatives that the patient was receiving the best curative and remedial treatment, and his sincerity always carried confidence and conviction.

He was gifted with no small amount of that introspective mental analysis which characterises so many Scotsmen, and his great delight was in a contemplative philosophy which sustained some religious, reflective, or mystical trend. He was a man who was capable of doing great things, and he was certainly a man whose friends had great expectations from him, for he had initiative original powers and an inventive, suggestive mind; but he possessed the defects of his qualities; his calm, contented disposition, his mysticism (usually associated with a keen intellect), and his firm optimism (that all would work well in the end) militated against his achieving early success and distinction. Ewart was so full of life—he made all the detailed arrangements for his own operation, and planned his summer holidays, and even arranged what books to read during his convalescence—that he may be said to have been absolutely open and "responsive" to life. He was the type of perfect gentleman; suave, self-resourceful, and self-reliant; sympathetic, and in consequence considerate for the welfare of others.

He possessed a deep feeling of altruism, with a most hopeful temperament; he had an imposing and pleasing presence, and these, combined with a refined intellect and good manner—he had a loathing contempt for any meanness or underhand dealing—made Ewart one of the most popular and charming characters whom the writer has met.

Dr. Ewart was never keen to attend public meetings, even when he had the opportunities to be present; he was lost in a self-assertive crowd; he loved so much more the *personal* touch, for he was the quiet scholar and he felt into the soul of things. He contributed on occasions to high-class magazines and journals. He wrote for the *Nineteenth Century*, the *Westminster* and *Empire Reviews*, *Quest*, *Chambers' Journal*, and others, and he excelled in magazine articles rather than in contributions to medical literature, because he had a passion for a more abundant life, and this made him extend his sympathies beyond his own special sphere. It was this lure for something more than was apparent in things that made him search for the deeper reality which existed and which he was thus led to pursue. In spite of this philosophic tendency he was one of the earliest of this passing generation to draw practical attention to the value of special industrial colonies for those afflicted with epilepsy, and he may be correctly described as the originator of the scheme adopted later by the London County Council when the Colony for the Insane Epileptic was founded at Epsom. He was the first to institute the training of nurses in the London asylums upon the basis of a syllabus adopted by the St. John Ambulance Association, as a recognition of which he was elected an Honorary Life Member of the Association. He took the greatest interest in physical drill for mental patients, many of whom in asylums need some encouragement to perform muscular movements, especially those of a general,

orderly, and sustained kind, and he was a firm believer in the maxim, *Mens sana in corpore sano*.

He was an ardent naturalist and loved the country with all its pursuits, and he was a great "gamester," being a "plus" golfer and well known at some of the principal links, a keen cricketer and "Footer" player, a good opponent at tennis, and a useful hockey hand, but owing to a football accident, which brought on a strained knee, he was obliged of late years to moderate his favourite bent towards athleticism. Dr. Ewart was a well-trained and well-read graduate of the Aberdeen University, and was intimately known to some of its most distinguished *alumni*, who were his fellow-students.

He came of a good family: his father was a Judge of High Court in Jamaica, and his mother was a Barclay. He married whilst at Claybury a daughter of the late Mr. Abraham Flint, of Chigwell; she and her young daughter are left to mourn the loss of a most devoted father. Last Easter he suffered from an abscess of the vermiform appendix, which was successfully treated in a nursing-home in London, and on Saturday, June 16th, he was further operated upon in his home at Claybury for appendicitis. The writer saw him the day before he died, when the wound, owing to complications, was re-opened and the abdomen re-examined. He was then calm, composed, and self-reliant, his only thoughts being for others. He died from exhaustion and shock four days after the operation, having for a few months only reaped the fruits of a too long-deferred promotion.

His remains were laid to rest, by his own wishes, near to the scenes of his long labours, and with every mark of love and respect. His great wish is probably now being realised; he had hoped after death to begin life in a new state with far more abundant opportunities for experience, having left behind him the busy strivings of a probationary existence.

It is hard to believe that Ewart has ended all his aims, plans, and activities! He will be tenderly recalled by several present medical superintendents who were his colleagues at Claybury—as well as by many matrons—as a loyal, sincere, and generously-minded friend, and to the writer and his family his memory will be long retained and affectionately cherished.

R. A.-J.

#### A CORRECTION.

In the discussion on Sir Robert Armstrong-Jones's paper on "Dreams," which appeared in the April number of the Journal, Dr. Rothsay Stewart is reported (p. 220) to have said—"it assumed a submental stimulus." Dr. Stewart writes: "This should be 'subminimal stimulus.' The term is borrowed from electricity, and the meaning wished to convey was that certain cells in the brain, which had received the least stimulus to allow of their acting, would have become active during a dream." We regret that this clerical error should have occurred.—Eds.

#### THE LIBRARY.

MEMBERS of the Association are reminded that the Library at 11, Chandos Street, W., is open daily for reading and for the purpose of borrowing books. Books may also be borrowed by post, provided that at the time of application threepence in stamps is forwarded to defray the cost of postage. Arrangements have been made with Messrs. Lewis to enable the Association to obtain books from the lending library belonging to that firm should any desired book not be in the Library. In addition, the Committee is willing to purchase copies of such books as will be of interest to members. Certain medical periodicals are circulated among such members as intimate their desire to be included in the list.

Members reducing their private libraries are requested to bear in mind the library of the Association.

Applications for books should be addressed to the Resident Librarian, Medico-Psychological Association, 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, W.

Other communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the City of London Mental Hospital, Dartford, Kent.

R. H. STEEN,  
Hon. Secretary, Library Committee.