

THE
JOURNAL OF MENTAL SCIENCE
[*Published by Authority of the Medico-Psychological Association
of Great Britain and Ireland.*]

No. 279 [NEW SERIES
No. 243.] OCTOBER, 1921. VOL. LXVII.

SIR GEORGE HENRY SAVAGE, M.D., F.R.C.P.

BORN 1842 : DIED 1921.

By the death of George Henry Savage on July 5th, 1921, at the ripe age of 78, English psychiatry has lost one of its most widely known representatives, the Medico-Psychological Association a former President and one of its most prominent members, English medicine one of its most remarkable personalities, and large numbers of the profession and the public a most trusted friend and counsellor.

The writer has been privileged to have access to records left by Savage himself of his parentage and early life, which cannot fail to be of interest as showing the factors forming the mental "make-up" in such a distinguished man.

He was born in 1842.

Savage's father was a Yorkshireman, and is described as having been "a good horseman, a lover of sports, a good shot and skater." He entered into business as a druggist first at Balham and afterwards at Brighton, where he was the first to give anæsthetics for the Brighton surgeons about 1856, was chairman of the local Athenæum, became an alderman of the Borough and later a Justice of the Peace. He had a keen appreciation of science and for fifty years was a regular attendant at the meetings of the British Association. Savage described him as having an encyclopædic knowledge, as not profound in any science but interested in all, and as having made many interesting experiments.

Savage's mother was of Scottish birth, her maiden name being Wallace. In addition to being a deeply religious woman she was also a great reader. She recognised the value of cultivating observation and took up the study of English botany for the sake of her two boys. The summer holidays were often spent with them on the Sussex downs "hunting out the names of the plants on the Linnean system" with the aid of botanical text-books. Savage's well-known love of botany was thus founded at a very early age.

His regard for her may be summarised in his own words: "She

seemed to me to be the most self-sacrificing and best woman I ever met. Her whole life was founded on the Christian faith." Savage learned to ride, skate and swim at an early age and this love of exercise and sport never deserted him. His experiences at various private schools at Brighton were not very happy. He described his last head master as having "no classical knowledge and no true scientific training," so that at the age of fifteen he had only read "the simplest Latin authors and no Greek beyond the Delectus." Nature study was, however, cultivated, and having already some knowledge of botany he soon took the lead. He and others ranged hills and dales within eight miles of Brighton and found birds' nests, flowers and forms of animal life; they yearly sent collections of wild flowers to a flower-show and generally obtained the prize. An assistant master, by name David Lyall, took a personal interest in him, which continued after he left the school and had a great part in shaping his future career.

At first Savage was destined to follow his father's business but this was not congenial to him. However, during that time he did a great deal of practical chemistry, made the various gases, crystallised out most of the salts, and attended classes in chemistry at Brighton College, the teacher being Prof. Bernays, subsequently Lecturer on Chemistry at St. Thomas's Hospital. Lyall, who was a frequent visitor at his father's house, stimulated him to work to become a medical man.

He then became apprenticed to a firm of doctors in Brighton, did dispensing and visited the Infirmary.

Lyall urged him to work for the matriculation of the University of London. This implied much very hard work at Latin, Greek, mathematics, etc., in which he was coached by Lyall and passed with honours in Botany.

He then entered as a pupil at the Sussex County Hospital, the House-Surgeon at the time being Mr. A. Willett, afterwards Surgeon to St. Bartholomew's Hospital. During the two years he spent there he still took a great interest in field botany and also used to go out at night for moths. "I think of some lovely nights spent in woods where the night side of nature was made plain to me." Nature in all its forms appealed to him, and he always regretted that fortune or chance never opened the path for original work to him in this direction.

In October, 1861, he entered as a student at Guy's Hospital, living in modest rooms in Great Ormond Street because "it was nearer the College of Surgeons and other museums than Guy's," working very hard—never less than twelve and often sixteen hours a day.

At that time Moxon and Hilton Fagge were demonstrators in the dissecting room, and among those on the staff were Hilton, Bryant, Habershon, Braxton-Hicks, Gull, Wilks, Bader, Cooper-Foster and Davies-Colley. Among fellow-students were Frederick Taylor, Howse

and Mickley (afterwards Medical Superintendent of St. Luke's Hospital).

Savage was a terrific reader, and has recorded that "Moxon rightly gauged my mental type when he said that probably I read the biggest books on any subject and forgot most but retained the essentials."

In due course he won the Treasurer's Gold Medal, qualified as M.R.C.S. in 1864 and L.R.C.P. in 1865. In the same year he graduated as M.B.Lond. and became House-Surgeon at Guy's Hospital. In the *Guy's Hospital Gazette*, January 31st, 1903, Savage recorded many interesting memories of the past, such as the introduction of the thermometer and the ophthalmoscope and his association with Gull, Wilks, Hughlings Jackson and Sutton, and recalled a forecast by Gull that it was possible there would be a time "when we should not only be able to see the back of the eye but 'right through people.'"

He was an active member of the Boating Club and a frequent swimmer at the Lambeth Baths.

His first association with Bethlem Hospital was in 1866 when for six months he held the post of what was then termed "resident student," being one of the second pair of qualified men thus appointed. Of this six months he wrote: "I believe that I alone saw the possibility which might open as a life's work." However, it was necessary that he should seek for remunerative work, and having been offered the post of medical officer to a lead-mining company at Nenthead, Cumberland, at a fixed salary, with horses and house provided and liberty to do general practice as well, he went there. The practice was of the most strenuous kind. He attended 500 confinements in four years; there were many cases of goitre and of miner's phthisis, an outbreak of smallpox to cope with and occasional accidents. On one occasion he had to amputate a leg unaided and to stop in the middle to do artificial respiration, the anæsthetic being given by the unskilled brother of the patient. He constantly had to ride over the fells on winter nights but his vigorous constitution and athletic nature made light of this, and he revelled in climbing crags, sport on the moors, the botany of the district, and ski-ing over snow and icy roads, on one occasion sliding down a frozen road into the village at the tail of a cow which was rushing away in terror. The village "never forgot the doctor and the cow." On one occasion his bridle was seized at a turnpike as "the last time you leaped the gate; it must have been you as there is nobody else in the county who could do it." During this time he was reading hard for the London M.D., which he took in 1867.

He became engaged to Miss Margaret Walton, of Alston, and was married on September 9th, 1868. A daughter was born in the following year, but in a few days after her birth his short first married life was terminated by the death of his wife from pulmonary embolism. This

tragedy entirely changed the current of his life. For a time he went to Germany with a friend "to look for mosses," botany as usual having an absorbing interest for him. He was in practice at Nenthead for four years. Then a vacancy occurred at Bethlem Hospital, Dr. Henry Rayner, at that time Assistant Medical Officer, having been appointed as Superintendent to Hanwell Asylum. Savage applied for the vacant appointment, and was unanimously selected by the governors from over 100 candidates.

In 1872 he went into residence at Bethlem Hospital and thus began the career in which he became famous.

At that time Dr. Rhys Williams was the Resident Physician and Superintendent, and Mr. G. H. Haydon, who had formed a personal friendship with Savage in 1866, was the Steward. A few words about Haydon are not out of place in this connection. He had been in Australia in youth where he bought land on which part of the City of Melbourne was afterwards built, and had formerly been Steward at the Devon County Asylum under Dr. (afterwards Sir J. C.) Bucknill. He had great talent in drawing and was keen on art and literature, Phelps the actor and Birkett Foster the artist being among his friends. He was a great lover of the country and a fine fly-fisherman, and had a cottage at Hurstbourne where he fished the rivers Test and Bourne. Savage recorded—"He gave me my first rod and first lesson in fishing." Haydon was also an enthusiastic Mason, and under his auspices Savage joined the Old Union Lodge and eventually passed through the chair, but gave up Masonry when he married a second time.

Haydon was a man of striking personality, and not only a great friend to Savage but to all who worked at Bethlem, and only retired a few years after the writer succeeded Savage as Resident Physician.

On his appointment to Bethlem Hospital Savage threw himself with characteristic energy into the work, read up all the literature of the subject, including most of the French and German journals, kept personal notes of all cases in addition to the statutory case-books, and inspired all who worked there to do the same. He also joined Klein's classes in physiology, working hard at preparing specimens and cutting sections, and made the most of the limited pathological opportunities at Bethlem Hospital by making microscopical preparations of morbid material. He was elected a member of the Medico-Psychological Association in 1873, and his name first appears in the *Journal of Mental Science* as attending a meeting in December, 1873, under the Presidency of Dr. Harrington Tuke, among those present being Maudsley, Wood, Blandford, Langdon Down, Paul, Mickle, Rayner, Sutherland, Stocker and Rhys Williams. Savage showed sections of spinal cord, of disseminated sclerosis and general paralysis.

Soon after his appointment Dr. Thompson Dickson, Lecturer on

and Mickleby (afterwards Medical Superintendent of St. Luke's Hospital).

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1911). The "Alternation of Neuroses," on which he read a paper at the British Medical Association in 1886, also greatly interested him, and he pointed out the frequency with which such conditions as migraine, asthma, hysteria, epilepsy or even diabetes alternated with insanity.

The question of criminal responsibility of the insane concerned him much, and he soon became known as an expert witness where insanity was pleaded as a defence in criminal cases. On the kindred question of "Drunkenness in Relation to Criminal Responsibility" he read a paper in 1886 (*Journ. Ment. Sci.*, vol. xxxii), pointing out the inconsistencies in medical opinion, as to responsibility for acts committed during drunkenness. His paper on "The Plea of Insanity" (*Journ. Ment. Sci.*, vol. xxxvii), read before our Association, is an excellent summary of the then position with regard to criminal responsibility, and it and the subsequent debate in which Dr. Orange of Broadmoor took part are well worth study. Among communications on the pathology of insanity may be mentioned "Cases of General Paralysis with Pachymeningitis" (*Journ. Ment. Sci.*, vols. xxix and xxx), "Cases of General Paralysis with Lateral Sclerosis of the Spinal Cord" (*Journ. Ment. Sci.*, vol. xxx), "Hæmorrhages in General Paralysis" (*Journ. Ment. Sci.*, vol. xxxi), "Hæmaturia, Maniacal Excitement and Hæmorrhagic Pachymeningitis" (*ibid.*), "Morbid Appearances from Hardening Nervous Tissue," communicated to the International Medical Congress, London, 1881 (*Journ. Ment. Sci.*, vol. xxvii), and "Punctiform Cerebral Hæmorrhage" (*ibid.*).

The individual care of the insane and his attempts to get at the seat of delusional states by prolonged personal interviews and endeavours to explain and re-educate into normal paths were notable long before the days of modern psycho-analysis, and he was characteristically untiring in this direction. In 1885 he had been elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of London and in 1886 he became President of our Association. His Presidential address, delivered at Bethlem Hospital, August 9th, 1886, was "On the Pathology of Insanity" (*Journ. Ment. Sci.*, vol. xxxii). In it he said: "I feel that the great physiological workers, like Ferrier, Horsley and others, are only the engineers who are studying the machinery, while we in asylums have the much more difficult problem of studying the motive power." He discussed diseases of the brain and of the body leading to insanity, the alternation of neuroses and disorders of function, and said—"All bodily disease has its mental aspect." With reference to the treatment of delusions of persecution he said: "In some of these cases there are reasonable methods of treatment, and in several very unpromising cases I have hunted the hallucinations out of house and home." And further—"Each of these convincing proofs has acted as a mental soothing draught, and in the end rest more and more complete has been gained

and the patient has got well." During his Presidency he also read a paper on the practical subject, "When should Homicidal Patients be Sent on Leave or Discharged?" and another, which excited much controversy, on "Whether there is ever Sufficient Reason for the Use of Strong Clothing and Side-arm Dresses." His claim was for freedom to use such restraint as he thought would give patients the best chance of recovery.

In 1887 he attended the International Medical Congress at Washington and opened a discussion on "Syphilis and its Relation to Insanity." An abstract of this is to be found in *Brain*, vol. x, from the *American Journal of Insanity*, October, 1887, and in a paper read by him before our Association in November, 1887 (*Journ. Ment. Sci.*, vol. xxxiii), entitled, "Notes on the International Congress, Washington." The relationship of general paralysis to syphilis had not then been fully established, but he referred to cases of long-standing syphilis followed by general paralysis, ordinary cases of general paralysis with a definite history of syphilis, cases of local syphilitic nerve lesions, treated and apparently cured and afterwards developing general paralysis, and cases starting in the spinal cord (ataxic type). In the discussion he said—"The consensus of opinion seems to be that I was right in saying that some cases of general paralysis undoubtedly come from syphilis." The writer, however, well remembers that Savage was coming to the conclusion at that time that all general paralysis was due to syphilis and not only due to the effects of overstrain as he had formerly taught.

During these years he had been a frequent contributor to the pages of *Brain*. In vol. i of that journal, before it became the organ of the Neurological Society, he had published papers on "Acute Mania associated with Abscess of the Brain," and on "Uterine Displacement Corrected and Insanity Cured." In vol. ix is a paper read by him before the Neurological Society on "Some of the Relationships between Epilepsy and Insanity," and in vol. xi he published "Two Cases of Insanity Depending upon Syphilitic Disease of the Arteries," and "Case of Epilepsy in which there are Periods of Automatism of a very Well-marked Nature." During this period he was in constant touch with Hughlings Jackson, Ferrier, Bristowe, Horsley and other neurologists.

While at Bethlem Hospital he had become much sought for as a consultant in mental cases, and in 1888 decided to retire from the post of Resident Physician and enter into consulting practice, which he did, residing at first at 3, Henrietta Street, W.

An important event during his life at Bethlem Hospital was his second marriage in 1882 to a daughter of Dr. H. Gawen Sutton of the London Hospital. Mrs. Savage was a lady of great personal charm, and her advent was an enormous addition to the social amenities of the Hospital. The dances and other entertainments for the patients became

delightful gatherings and she was much beloved by all with whom she came in contact. A son was born in 1883 who eventually entered the medical profession.

Reference must be made to the "resident students" (now called house-physicians), two of whom were appointed every six months. Many of Savage's happiest memories related to these. He did all he could to make them interested in the work of the Hospital; no less than twenty of them subsequently became assistant medical officers or superintendents of various public and private asylums. L. E. Shaw subsequently became Physician to Guy's, F. C. Turner to the London Hospital, and B. Pitts, G. H. Makins, W. Tyrrell and J. B. Lawford joined the staff of St. Thomas's Hospital, and many were life-long friends. On Saturday afternoons the racket-court in winter and the tennis-courts in summer afforded opportunities for vigorous exercise, in which Savage himself always took part. Visits to the Convalescent Home at Witley enabled him to follow his old hobby of botany and he always encouraged others to take an interest in it. On his retirement from Bethlem Hospital his colleagues and former "students" entertained him at dinner and presented him with a silver rose-bowl. In addition to the class from Guy's Hospital he held special clinical classes for men preparing for the M.D. London, and was always ready to demonstrate in his inimitable manner to foreign and other visitors.

A special feature for some years was the Sunday morning round, at which Wilks, Bristowe and others were frequent attendants. He never kept his knowledge, experience and views under a bushel, and his daily morning visits to the wards were always made in company with his assistant medical officer and resident students, who therefore did not suffer from the absence of constant touch with their chief which is the misfortune in many large asylums.

In 1884 the first edition of his text-book, *Insanity and Allied Neuroses*, was published. This was reprinted in 1886, revised in 1890, was subsequently reprinted several times, and in 1907 a new and enlarged edition was published in association with Dr. E. Goodall, who was responsible for bringing the pathological section up-to-date. The book was essentially practical and clinical, was widely read, and for long was a standard text-book for students in the London School of Medicine.

On leaving Bethlem Hospital in 1888 he was made a member of the Governing Body, and to the end of his life took an active part in its deliberations and in all measures for the improvement of the Hospital and its opportunities for clinical instruction, such as the formation of an out-patient department and the arrangements for courses of lectures in connection with diplomas in psychological medicine. He had for long taken an active part in the management of the After-Care Association and continued to act as its Treasurer to the year of his death.

He had formed a considerable nucleus of consulting practice while at Bethlem Hospital, and after leaving this largely increased. There was, however, no diminution of his activities from the literary point of view. At the British Medical Association meeting at Leeds, 1889, he read a paper on "Massage Treatment in Insanity," at Bournemouth in 1891 on "The Influence of Surroundings on the Production of Insanity," and before our Association in 1892 on "Influenza and Neurosis" (*Journ. Ment. Sci.*, vol. xxxviii). There were also papers (British Medical Association, London, 1895) on "Insanity of Conduct," and in 1901 on "The Use and Abuse of Travel in the Treatment of Mental Disorders" (*Journ. Ment. Sci.*, vol. xlvii). To *Brain* he contributed articles on "Imperative Ideas" (vol. xviii, 1894) and on "Heredity and Neurosis" (vol. xx, 1897). The latter was his address as President of the Neurological Society. In the *Transactions of the Medical Society of London* (vol. xvii) is a paper on "Some Neuroses of the Climacteric," with a summary of cases at Bethlem Hospital 1888-1903.

In 1907 he delivered the Bolingbroke Lecture on "The Factors of Insanity" before the South-West London Medical Society, and in the same year the Lumleian Lectures at the College of Physicians on "The Increase of Insanity." His conclusions were: "I do not find there is any real ground for alarm in the increased number among the insane; there are many reasons for the apparent increase." "It is noteworthy, too, that there is no increase in persons of the young and of the middle ages, the increase being greater after the age of sixty."

In 1909 he was Harveian Orator before the College of Physicians. He reviewed the treatment of the insane in Harvey's day and the progress since, and referred to experimental psychology and hypnotism. As regards the latter he said—"Those mental disorders that are purely functional and such as do not cross the insane border-line may be benefited." In 1912 he received the honour of Knighthood as a rather belated recognition of his remarkable career. Unfortunately he had had some years before this again to suffer a severe bereavement by the death of Mrs. Savage, who was thus unable to share in the honour conferred on him.

In 1912 also he was made the first President of the new Section of Psychiatry of the Royal Society of Medicine. In his address he gave a general review of the past, referring to the work of Crichton Browne at Wakefield, of Hack Tuke, Bevan Lewis, Wigglesworth and others. He spoke of Tuke's *Dictionary of Psychological Medicine* as a "mine still worth working," and said that in it would be found "many evidences that what seem to be quite new and original observations or beliefs are neither new nor original." Very characteristic of him are such remarks as the following: "Let us be collectors and recorders, but at the same time let us recognise that what seems to us to be fixed and established

to-day may in the future prove to have been only partially true." "Agnosticism in science is not infidelity, and we must cultivate it." "We are prepared to follow truth where it leads, and a dim light is better than none in such darkness as the realms of life and consciousness." In 1912 he lectured to the Medical Graduates' College and Polyclinic on "Medico-legal Relationships of General Paralysis of the Insane" (*Lancet*, February 3rd, 1912).

During the late war he was one of the consultants attached to Lord Knutsford's group of hospitals for officers, and read a paper before our Association on July 27th, 1916, on "Mental Disabilities for War Service." He also took part in the formation of the Enham Village Centres for Disabled Men. In July, 1917, he wrote for our Journal on "Dr. Hughlings Jackson on Mental Disorders," summarising Jackson's well-known views as to the presence of positive and negative states in nervous and mental disorders. He also referred to his association with Jackson and Sutton in his early days at Guy's Hospital following the teaching of Gull and Wilks.

His last communications to our Journal appear to have been an obituary notice of the late Dr. G. W. Mould (*Journ. Ment. Sci.*, April, 1919), and an appreciatory note appended to the obituary of Dr. David Yellowlees (*ibid.*, April, 1921).*

In addition to the numerous papers to medical journals already referred to, he wrote no less than twenty of the articles in Tuke's *Dictionary* and six in *Allbutt's System of Medicine* in the section of Mental Diseases (vol. viii), perhaps the most important one being that on "General Paralysis of the Insane" in association with Dr. E. Goodall.

Enough has been said to show the comprehensive nature of his energies in connection with medical literature.

A short summary must be given of some other lines in which his vigour and inexhaustible vitality were displayed. In his earlier years at Bethlem Hospital his holidays were usually spent in walking tours with a friend, and in this way he visited Austria, the Tyrol and Norway, but Swiss mountaineering did not at first attract him. But having won the Derby sweepstake at the St. Stephen's Club he went to Zermatt, where he soon became a vigorous climber. He made a record ascent of the Matterhorn, reaching the summit from the Hörnli in four hours. He once ascended the Weisshorn by moonlight, and his ascent of the Gabelhorn from the Trift Glacier is recorded in the *Alpine Journal*. He became a member of the Alpine Club, and was a friend of many well-known Alpine climbers, among whom may be mentioned Frederick Taylor, Howse, Clinton Dent and Makins. Eventually he became Vice-President of the Alpine Club.

For many years he was a member of the "Sunday Tramps," and was

* Also a review of *Morning Knowledge* (*ibid.*, July, 1921).

associated in this way with Leslie Stephen, James Sully and many others well-known in the world of literature.

The Organon Club and the Casual Club also brought him into relation with many who became well known in science, such as Odling, Rolleston, Clifford Allbutt, Ray Lankester, Thistleton Dyer, Sprengel, Donkin, Balfour Browne and others.

He was a keen fencer, and the "Savage Shield," which he presented, is annually competed for at the Epée Club. He was a member of the Athenæum Club and of many dining clubs, such as the Sydenham, the St. Albans, the United Hospitals (Guy's and St. Thomas's), the Fifteen Club, and the College Club. He was a great *raconteur* and was always in request as an after-dinner speaker, his fund of information and humour being apparently inexhaustible. He was a most genial host. At Hurstbourne in Hampshire, where he had a cottage, he spent week-ends in fishing, cycling, golf and botany, enjoying every moment in association with his most intimate friend of many years, Seymour Sharkey.

In view of his botanical knowledge it was appropriate that he should have been for many years the representative of the College of Physicians on the Committee of Management of the Chelsea Physick Garden founded by Sir John Soane.

He was consulting physician to several private asylums, notably to the Priory, Roehampton, and Chiswick House, and also to the Earlswood Asylum, Redhill. He was also an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Academy of Medicine, Ireland.

For many years he was a regular attendant at St. Peter's Church, Vere Street, becoming a close friend of Canon Page-Roberts, afterwards Dean of Salisbury.

His increasing deafness, however, recently rendered it impossible for him to hear a preacher, and made it very difficult for him to follow and take part in debates in medical meetings in which he had formerly been so active. But as recently as February last he was present at the meeting of our Association to listen to Sir Frederick Mott on the pathology of dementia præcox.

For many months increasing ill-health had caused anxiety to his friends, but it was characteristic that he should fight against his disabilities. Gradually he had to abandon his more active pursuits, but still dined out as long as he was able. In May he retired from all official work, and only about three weeks before his death he expressed to the writer his conviction that he should not live beyond August. Shortly after this an attack of hemiplegia from which he did not regain consciousness mercifully relieved his sufferings, and he died on July 5th, 1921. The first part of the funeral service was held at St. Marylebone Parish Church, and the interment of his ashes after cremation took place at Sevenoaks by the side of his second wife.

He is survived by his daughter, Mrs. Droeser, and his son, Dr. Harold Savage, who is in practice in the Malay States.

By those who had been his colleagues he was always looked up to as a great master; he never lost interest in their careers, and many were the kindnesses to which those who worked with him can look back. He was always a ready adviser in troubles or difficulties. Many of his aphorisms remain in the memory, and his example of strenuous work and undying interest in his profession remains as a constant inspiration. Of him it may be truly said—"He being dead yet speaketh."

R. PERCY SMITH.

Part I.—Original Articles.

The Position of Psychological Medicine in Medical and Allied Services. The Presidential Address at the Annual Meeting of the Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain and Ireland, held in London on July 11th–15th, 1921. By C. HUBERT BOND, C.B.E., D.Sc., M.D.Edin., F.R.C.P.Lond., Commissioner of the Board of Control, and Emeritus Lecturer in Psychiatry at Middlesex Hospital Medical School.

PERMIT me at once to express my deep appreciation of the honour you have done me in electing me your President, and my particular satisfaction in finding myself inducted into this chair by a friend of many years' standing.

As to the wisdom of your choice I am still very doubtful, but the encouragement received from members of the Association, to whom those doubts have been fully communicated, and from my colleagues on the Board of Control, whose goodwill in the matter was essential, emboldens me to hope that my affection for our Association, now eighty years old, and the friendships gained during a close upon thirty years' membership, will in some measure obliterate deficiencies—be these through lack of time or capacity.

Charged with the preparation and delivery of an address, choice of subject must always be a matter of moment to the President-Elect, and, as the years roll on and the volume of addresses swells, the task of making a suitable selection becomes more formidable. Be their subject what it may—historical, analytical or synthetical—many of them have been scholarly and erudite, some of them landmarks, and all have been the fruit of expenditure of much time, and not infrequently of original observation and research. Nor is the task lightened when we yet have ringing in our ears the Maudsley Lecture—worthy of its orator—and when the address of the immediate Past-President was of the masterly