

## OBITUARY.

HENRY ANDREWS COTTON, M.A., M.D.

OVER here Dr. Henry Cotton has been principally associated with the controversy which has followed his urgent advocacy of the treatment of focal sepsis in cases of mental disorder, but to the people of New Jersey and the American nation the quality of his work has been known through his quarter of a century of service as Medical Director of the New Jersey State Hospital. "He belongs to that select company whose claim of fame rests not upon the possession of wealth, the achievement of high place in political life or other distinctions in which material considerations play their part, but upon tireless, devoted and inspired labour on behalf of stricken humanity."

Dr. Cotton came of old English stock; his ancestors on both sides were residents of North Carolina and Virginia from Colonial days, before the American War of Independence. He was born in Norfolk, Virginia, on May 18, 1876, and received his early education in the public schools of Baltimore, graduating from the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute in 1894. The following year was spent at the Johns Hopkins University studying electrical engineering; he then transferred to the University of Maryland, and received his medical degree in 1899. His first position after leaving the medical school was that of Assistant Physician at the City Asylum, Bay View, now the Baltimore City Hospital, and then in 1900 he took a similar position at the Worcester State Hospital, Worcester, Mass., where he remained for three years. From 1903 to 1907 he was on the Staff of the Danvers (Mass.) State Hospital for the Insane, but during 1905 and 1906 he studied at the Royal Psychiatric Clinic of Munich, Germany, under Kraepelin and Alois Alzheimer, where he carried out a research into the fatty degeneration of the cerebral cortex in the psychoses, with special reference to dementia præcox. His work in regard to this neuro-pathology was thorough, and it is interesting to observe that H. Gosline records that Alzheimer admitted that Cotton was the first to correlate disease of the second and third cortical layers with dementia præcox, mentioning at the same time that the fat occurs over the entire cortex.

His wife, who became an accomplished draughtsman, took special interest in this microscopical work, and her illustrations of his preparations are models of high order.

A year after returning from his study abroad Dr. Cotton was promoted to the post of Assistant Superintendent at the Danvers Hospital, and in November, 1907, while still in his early thirties, he was appointed Medical Director of the New Jersey State Hospital. "It is with Dr. Cotton that credit lies for the transformation wrought in the administration of the State Hospital, an accomplishment which would have crowned his professional career with honour, even though the record showed nothing else of a noteworthy character." Carrying on the humane work of Dorothea Dix, he inaugurated more enlightened methods than those previously obtaining. One of his first acts was to eliminate mechanical restraint. At that time 90 women were in strait-jackets day and night, and many others were restrained by wristlets, muffs, anklets and straps. More than 200 were tied in bed each night. Within a few days after Dr. Cotton took charge all these unfortunates were released, and shortly thereafter all male patients were freed from restraining and confining devices. More than 700 of these were discarded in 1907, not to be used again.

In many other respects the administration of the hospital was improved, and from a place with an unsavoury reputation, it was transformed into a model institution—a hospital for the treatment of the afflicted, not an asylum for their permanent confinement, equalling and even excelling in many ways the efforts of the more privileged private hospitals.

In June, 1914, in recognition of his work he was honoured with the degree of Master of Arts by the University of Maryland. He succeeded in obtaining generous

appropriations from the Legislature with which to carry on his splendid work. The present groups of new buildings for patients, staff, laboratories and administration stand as a memorial to his devoted labour.

The old building, opened in 1848, was renovated and reorganized on more spacious lines. To effect all this, drastic revisions in management and construction were necessary, requiring indefatigable personal effort and unbounded energy and enthusiasm, all of which he gave unstintingly.

In December, 1927, there were over 2,500 patients of both sexes in residence, and in an adjoining building on the estate was the State Hospital for the Criminal Insane, housing at that time 229 men, convicts and criminals.

All these efforts, necessary and laudable though they were, and to many sufficiently satisfying, were but a means to an end, the preliminary for future labours.

Unless the internal shackles of the mind were broken it were ironical to remove the feeble physical restraints of the body. He was convinced that medicine could break these shackles and so he pressed on, and whilst the hospital was being reorganized, active investigations and treatment were being pursued, the results and conclusions appearing in the collected papers of the Medical Staff.

The research at Munich was repeated and developed, and convinced that these degenerative changes had a toxic origin, he pushed his work from a descriptive histological to a therapeutic level in the treatment of paresis and focal infections. It may be permitted here to refer to the sequence of this development at Trenton.

Impressed by the results of treatment of sepsis in general medicine he made "a plea for the general introduction of these modern medical methods amongst the insane", and as a result a dental surgeon was appointed who considered the conditions he met were amenable to only one form of treatment—extraction. It was observed that following this treatment there was a definite rise in the recovery-rate of those patients who had received dental treatment.

"I had not felt, in the eighteen years I have been connected with State Hospital work, that I had done anything, until recently, towards effecting cures in cases which would not recover spontaneously; but, from the results of our efforts during the last nine months, I feel I am justified in believing we are doing something now that has not been done before." With his characteristic courage and energy the hospital was soon equipped with the facilities for thorough investigation and treatment of these conditions; ear, nose and throat, urogenital tract, gynæcological and the alimentary canal. In co-operation with John W. Draper and Jerome M. Lynch he investigated the surgical intestinal pathology in the functional psychoses, finding on laparotomy conditions justifying partial or complete colectomy.

Always active to acquire and adapt any therapeutic measure for his patients, he applied on a large scale a wide variety of the methods of physical medicine, electrical radiations, heat, etc.; he found considerable value in the use of continuous colon lavage, and soon had large rooms fitted with numerous tables for this treatment, which he considered reduced, but did not wholly remove, the necessity for major abdominal surgical procedures. All his publications were now devoted to the therapeutic aspect of psychiatry. Chief amongst these were the Louis Vanuxem Lectures at Princeton University in January, 1921, "The Defective, Delinquent and the Insane: The Relation of Focal Infection to their Causation, Prevention and Treatment".

In 1923 he read at the Annual Meeting in London of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association a paper on "The Relation of Chronic Sepsis to the So-called Functional Mental Disorders"—a masterly communication—and in this he submitted that the basal idea of his work had its origin in England.

He retired from active work at the State Hospital on October 1, 1930, but continued his association as Director of Research with the title of Director—Emeritus.

Dr. Cotton had been in poor health and suffering from heart trouble for some time, and shortly before the end he had had several weeks' enforced confinement at his home. He felt sufficiently well to resume his habit of lunching daily

at his club, when on May 8, 1933, suddenly after luncheon, he died from angina pectoris and coronary embolism. He was in his fifty-seventh year.

To all who knew him there is a deep feeling of personal loss. Professionally he stood a persistent champion of humane care and enlightened treatment of the insane. Considerate with his patients, generous with his co-workers, stimulating with his students, he is revered as much for his example of devotion and sincerity as for his record of social service and professional idealism.

Less than a month before his death the New Jersey Legislature had adopted a resolution lauding his work.

Dr. Cotton served with the United States Army during the Spanish-American War, and as a Major in the Army Medical Corps during the World War. He was a Lecturer in Psychopathology at Princeton University, Acting Director of the Psychiatric Clinic for Correctional Institutions of New Jersey, and Acting Director of the Medicine and Psychiatry State Board of Institutions and Agencies of New Jersey. He was a member of the House of Delegates of the American Medical Association, 1921-1922; Member of the American Neurological Association, American Psychiatric Association, New England Society of Psychiatry, Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Diseases, American Psychopathological Association and the Society of American Bacteriologists, and a Corresponding Member of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain.

By reason of his Colonial ancestry he was a member of the Sons of the Revolution and Sons of Colonial Wars and Phi Sigma Kappa Fraternity, and also of the North Caroline Society of Cincinnati. It was while he was connected with the Danvers institution that Dr. Cotton married, in 1903, Miss Alice Della Keyes, of Baltimore. Mrs. Cotton survives him, with two sons; the elder is a medical student at the Johns Hopkins Medical School.

T. C. GRAVES.

#### PSYCHOPATHOLOGY AND PSYCHOTHERAPY SUB-COMMITTEE.

##### LONDON LOCAL GROUP.

Amongst the aims of the Sub-Committee has been the one to promote exchange of ideas, and the formation of informal groups of workers interested in psychopathology. One such group is the London Discussion Circle, which meets, under the leadership of Dr. M. E. Franklin, at 8.30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of every month, at 3, Bulstrode Street, Welbeck Street, W. 1.

Formed in January, 1928, it has held an uninterrupted course of most successful meetings, the average attendance being eighteen or nineteen. The subjects discussed have been very varied, and a sample selection is given below :

- Types of suicidal attempts.
- Mental testing in psychosis.
- Repetition.
- Behaviourism, *Gestalt* and psycho-analysis.
- Is psycho-analytic investigation scientific ?
- Hadfield's psychotherapy.
- Asocial children.
- The psychopathology of civilized communities.
- Constructive psychotherapy.
- Feelings of isolation in mental disorder.
- Neurotic symptoms in healthy people.
- The selection of the method of treatment.
- The psycho-biological views of Adolf Meyer.
- A type of frigidity in women.
- Drawing, modelling and writing of children.
- Sex jealousy as an artefact of culture.
- Genetic relationships of paranoia and hysteria.
- Psychological factors in contraception.