

" In adopting our title of the *Journal of Mental Science*, published by authority of the *Medico-Psychological Association*, we profess that we cultivate in our pages mental science of a particular kind, namely, such mental science as appertains to medical men who are engaged in the treatment of the insane. But it has been objected that the term mental science is inapplicable, and that the term mental physiology or mental pathology, or psychology, or psychiatry (a term much affected by our German brethren), would have been more correct and appropriate; and that, moreover, we do not deal in mental science, which is properly the sphere of the aspiring metaphysical intellect. If mental science is strictly synonymous with metaphysics, these objections are certainly valid; for although we do not eschew metaphysical discussion, the aim of this JOURNAL is certainly bent upon more attainable objects than the pursuit of those recendite inquiries which have occupied the most ambitious intellects from the time of Plato to the present, with so much labour and so little result. But while we admit that metaphysics may be called one department of mental science, we maintain that mental physiology and mental pathology are also mental science under a different aspect. While metaphysics may be called speculative mental science, mental physiology and pathology, with their vast range of inquiry into insanity, education, crime, and all things which tend to preserve mental health, or to produce mental disease, are not less questions of mental science in its practical, that is in its sociological point of view. If it were not unjust to high mathematics to compare it in any way with abstruse metaphysics, it would illustrate our meaning to say that our practical mental science would fairly bear the same relation to the mental science of the metaphysicians as applied mathematics bears to the pure science. In both instances the aim of the pure science is the attainment of abstract truth; its utility, however, frequently going no further than to serve as a gymnasium for the intellect. In both instances the mixed science aims at, and, to a certain extent, attains immediate practical results of the greatest utility to the welfare of mankind; we therefore maintain that our JOURNAL is not inaptly called the *Journal of Mental Science*, although the science may only attempt to deal with sociological and medical inquiries, relating either to the preservation of the health of the mind or to the amelioration or cure of its diseases; and although not soaring to the height of abstruse metaphysics, we only aim at such metaphysical knowledge as may be available to our purposes, as the mechanic uses the formuleries of mathematics. This is our view of the kind of mental science which physicians engaged in the grave responsibility of caring for the mental health of their fellow-men may, in all modesty, pretend to cultivate; and while we cannot doubt that all additions to our certain knowledge in the speculative department of the science will be great gain, the necessities of duty and of danger must ever compel us to pursue that knowledge which is to be obtained in the practical departments of science with the earnestness of real workmen. The captain of a ship would be none the worse for being well acquainted with the higher branches of astronomical science, but it is the practical part of that science as it is applicable to navigation which he is compelled to study."—*Sir J. C. Bucknill, M.D., F.R.S.*

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CONTENTS FOR OCTOBER, 1919.

	Pages
Original Articles.—	
Psychiatry a Hundred Years Ago: with Comments on the Problems of To-day: Presidential Address, by Bedford Pierce, M.D., F.R.C.P.Lond. —Goitre and the Psychoses; by Norman Routh Phillips, M.D.Brux., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.Lond. —On the Cytology of the Cerebro-spinal Fluid in Mental Disease; by G. L. Brunton, M.D.Edin.	219—257
Clinical Notes and Cases.—	
Notes on a Case Treated by Hypnotic Suggestion; by G. Rutherford Jeffrey, M.D., F.R.C.P.E., F.R.S.E. —Notes on Two Cases of Epilepsy in Twins, with Photographs; by R. M. Toledo, M.D.	258—262
Occasional Notes.—	
The Late Dr. Charles Arthur Mercier	263
Reviews.—	
Sixty-seventh Annual Report of the Inspectors of Lunatics (Ireland) for the year ending December 31st, 1917.—Mental Diseases; by R. H. Cole, M.D., F.R.C.P. —Studies in Forensic Psychiatry; by Bernard Glueck, M.D. —Rational Sex Ethics; by W. F. Robie, M.D. —Sane Sex Life and Sane Sex Living; by H. W. Long, M.D. —Experiments in Psychical Research; by John Edgar Coover. —Spirit Experiences; by Charles A. Mercier, M.D.	263—273
Epitome of Current Literature	273—274
Notes and News.—	
The Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain and Ireland: Annual Meeting.—Mental Deficiency.—Death of Dr. Mercier.—Examination for Nursing Certificate.—Notice to Contributors	275—317

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