

OBITUARIES

HENRI EY

By CH. BRISSET (translated by F. A. Jenner)

Henri Ey died on 6 November 1977. For 40 years he had been the dominant figure of French psychiatry. He came from an exceptional generation and trained at the same time as Pierre Male, Jacques Lacan and Sacha Nacht, who together led psychoanalysis in France. Ey himself, though, was not an analyst, but he tried to integrate psychoanalysis with general psychiatry. In this he was much influenced by Hughlings Jackson. The book he wrote in 1938 with Julien Rouart, which was expanded and republished in 1975 as *Des Idées de Jackson à un Modèle Organodynamique* expressed the views which dominated his life. He thought that psychiatry could not avoid looking at the articulation of diverse levels of psychic life, and their disorganization.

He was a prolific writer, and among his works one must cite his books: *Les Études Psychiatriques* and the *Manuel de Psychiatrie. La Conscience*, his most searching work, appeared in 1963 and has been translated into German, Spanish, Italian and Japanese, and more recently into English. The *Traité des Hallucinations* appeared in 1973 and is a monumental work of more than 1,500 pages.

Henri Ey was not only a theoretician and thinker, he was also a great clinician. He worked on the same wards near Chartres for 40 years. Each week he taught at a seminar in Paris frequented by perhaps half of the French psychiatrists of his time. He was a stimulating organizer of national and international meetings (for example the Conferences of Bonneval and the Franco-German meetings). He was the General Secretary of 'L'Évolution Psychiatrique' and the editor of the review of the same name. He was the founder and the first secretary of the World Psychiatric Association. He was also a militant, one of the principal workers for reforms of the French psychiatric hospitals and for the separation of psychiatry and neurology, which has made the increase in numbers of French psychiatrists possible.

This man, of great intelligence and forcefulness, spent his career with some indifference to honours and titles; he was an unpretentious and good man, affable to all. One can nevertheless say that he has been the man who brought about a veritable renaissance of psychiatry in his country.

W. H. SHELDON*

By RICHARD N. WALKER

Dr William H. Sheldon, Director of the Biological Humanics Center in Cambridge, Massachusetts, died there on 16 September 1977. Sheldon is the man who invented somatotyping—a classification of variations in human body structure, to which he related variations in temperament, in physical and mental illness, and in patterns of growth and ageing.

Born in 1898 in Warwick, Rhode Island, Sheldon grew up amid woods and marshes. His work shows the imprint of his country background; of his mother who raised five children and was midwife to a village; of his father, a naturalist, breeder and judge of animals; and of his godfather William James, the psychologist and philosopher. At age 10 he was working for the State ornithologist, reporting on animals of the woods and fields—observing, describing, classifying. At 15 he took pride in his ability to match judges' scorings of livestock on 100-point scales. As an adult he turned his naturalist's eye on human structure and behaviour.

After public school, Sheldon attended Brown University and the University of Colorado. From the

University of Chicago he received his Ph.D. in psychology in 1926, his M.D. in 1933. He taught at Northwestern University and the University of Chicago and Wisconsin. A two-year fellowship in Europe allowed him to study with Jung and to visit Freud and Kretschmer.

In 1938 he moved to Harvard, where he did much of his basic research, with such colleagues as S. S. Stevens, the experimental psychologist, and E. A. Hooton, the physical anthropologist. During World War II he served as lieutenant colonel in the Army Medical Corps. From 1947 until 1959 he was Director of the Constitution Laboratory at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, succeeding Dr G. Draper, a pioneer in constitutional medicine. He has also held research appointments at the University of California, Berkeley, and, since 1951, at the University of Oregon Medical School.

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Sheldon's earliest book (*Psychology and the Promethan Will*, 1936) and his latest one (*Prometheus Revisited*, 1975) are broad, provocative and provoking schemes for merging religious humanism with biologically grounded social psychiatry. Between these publications, he worked singlemindedly to propose and refine methods for describing individual human physical structure: to develop a 'biological identification tag'. Best known are his primary components of endomorphy (roughly speaking, the softness and roundness of a physique), mesomorphy (heaviness of bone and muscle development), and ectomorphy (attenuation, 'stretchedoutness'). By measuring the strength of each component in each individual and assigning a three-part index, the somatotype, Sheldon produced a tool which comes much closer to describing and encoding the great range of variations on the basic human body plan than was possible with older, pigeonholing typologies.

Over the years his methods moved through several revisions toward objectivity, and always seeking measures that maximize invariance, that evaluate physique not just as a current manifestation but as a lifelong trajectory. Along the way he has reported associations of somatotype with temperament, delinquency, and mental illness. His reports on physique, health and longevity followed in the surviving veterans of the Spanish-American war (1898), and on the later careers of 200 delinquent boys first studied 25 years ago, will be completed by his colleagues.

Sheldon's studies of some biological underpinnings of behaviour offered a much-needed counterbalance to a psychology one-sidedly emphasising learning and environment. Psychology regarded this offer doubtfully, though the term *somatotyping* found currency in labelling many sorts of physique appraisal methods, much as the term *psychoanalysis* was misapplied to all sorts of appraisal and treatment methods, and even 'schools' of somatotyping developed, like the schools of psychoanalysis (Sheldon found this comparison odious).

A keen observer, Sheldon was thoroughly convinced of the value and accuracy of his observations—an asset in a pioneer researcher, a problem to academic psychologists mistrustful of personal judgements. His irreverence for some of psychology's sacred cows, and his schoolboy's sense of mischief combined with a talent for finding just the right parallel in nature to point up a description of a human structure or action, have needed many a colleague. But Sheldon enjoyed his life. A seven-days-a-week worker, a diner at cafeterias because he could not stand the delays and pretentiousness of restaurants, an inveigher against the poisons in modern life, he was also wholehearted in his appreciation of an idea, a friend, a sparrow on his windowsill, an old coin. (Numismatists knew him as the author of the standard work classifying early American cents.) His work cleared and broadened one roadway into the study of human biology and behaviour that had been an overgrown trial.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Request for Agoraphobic Patients

A controlled trial of imipramine and behaviour therapy in the treatment of agoraphobia is being conducted at the Maudsley Hospital. We would be grateful for referral of patients suffering from agoraphobia who are able to attend on an out-patient basis. The patients would be offered early assessment interviews, and those found suitable would begin treatment in the near future. Referral letters should be addressed to Dr I. M. Marks or Dr R. S. Stern, The Maudsley Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 8AZ.

The Priory, Roehampton, London

The management of The Priory, Roehampton, have recently opened an extension at Galsworthy House, on Kingston Hill, which is a specialist unit for the private treatment of alcoholism and drink

problems in general. Treatment is based on the basic concept that alcoholism or associated drink problems are illnesses which impair all aspects of an individual's life.

The programme is under the direction of Dr Max Glatt, and includes the comprehensive philosophy successfully proved over the years by Alcoholics Anonymous. Patients must recognize their alcohol dependence or drink related problem before they are admitted, and hence the co-operation of the patient's physician or psychiatrist, family, friends and colleagues is actively sought.

The professional staff includes physicians and psychiatrists, counsellors on alcoholism, therapists, recovered alcoholics, and the support of The Priory's experienced psychiatric staff and facilities. A four-week residential course is followed by intensive out-patient care and induction to Alcoholics Anonymous.