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WILLIAM McDougall (1871-1938).

In the death of William McDougall psychology has lost one of its leading figures. As far as the English-speaking world and the present century are concerned, his influence in psychology and kindred fields has probably been greater than that of any other. The permanent significance and value of this influence we are still too near the event to estimate, but it is certain that he has left a gap which no one of his contemporaries can fill. With something of the mind and outlook of a philosopher, the scientific training of a biologist and the laboratory experience of a physiologist, McDougall's contribution to the progress of psychology could hardly fail to be important. For more than thirty years he has occupied a prominent place in the psychological world, played a part in the development of psychological and educational thought, such as it is given to few men to play, and been in the forefront of some of the most fundamental biological and psychological controversies of our time.

The width of McDougall's interests and activities is illustrated by the scientific societies of which he was a member, and before whom he read papers at one time or another. These were the Physiological, the Neurological, the Royal Anthropological, the Sociological, the Medico-Psychological, the Aristotelian, the British Psychological, the Mind Association, the Royal Society of Medicine, the German Society for Experimental Psychology, the Society for Psychical Research. Thus while his main interests and his life's work were in psychology, he was an active contributor to scientific progress in other fields.

In psychology McDougall is generally thought of as the founder and leader of what has come to be called the "hormic" school. The essential characteristic of this school is its emphasis on the purpose factor in human and animal behaviour, and its tracing of this factor downwards and backwards to its primitive manifestation in human and animal instincts. There has been a heated controversy round McDougall's theory of instinct, more particularly

in America, and McDougall has been charged with introducing a new meaning of the word "instinct", which has led to such confusion that the use of the word had better be abandoned altogether. It is certain that whoever introduced the new meaning it was not McDougall, since McDougall's meaning is very close to the original meaning of the word "instinctus", which the Romans employed to translate the Greek word "hormē".

McDougall's theory of the relation between instinct and emotion has also led to controversy. In this case, however, he was merely seeking to define more clearly a relation already asserted by William James. Whatever our views regarding the scientific validity of this theory in its detailed working out, it has been found exceedingly useful both to the educationist and to the psychiatrist in clarifying thought regarding the emotions. It is almost certainly an over-simplification of the facts, but for that very reason it is exceedingly useful as a kind of framework if one may so speak.

McDougall himself, in the first volume of *The History of Psychology in Autobiography*, has told us that the psychologists who have appealed to him most have been Lotze, Stout and James, but of these James has been for him his "model". That is more or less what one might have deduced from his writings. The influence of all three is deep and pervasive, that of Lotze more recognizable in his philosophical position than in his psychological, that of Stout in his psychology, and that of James in both.

McDougall's published work was voluminous—some twenty books and more than a hundred and twenty papers, reviews, articles, etc. Apart from books and articles of a more or less popular character, the scientific work falls into three fairly well-marked divisions or periods. There is first of all his early experimental work represented by papers in the *British Journal of Psychology*—of which he was one of the founders—and elsewhere. This experimental period is noteworthy from a general point of view for the development of his theory of the drainage of nervous energy, by which he sought to account for a number of psychological phenomena at the sensory and higher levels. The little book on *Physiological Psychology*, in the opinion of good judges one of the best things he ever wrote, represents fairly adequately his psychological position at this time.

The next period may be said to be ushered in by the publication of his *Introduction to Social Psychology*, the most widely known, most criticized and most influential of all McDougall's books. This was a period of intense literary activity, the keynote of which may be said to be a direct attack on mechanistic theories of all kinds. To it belong his *Body and Mind*, his *Group Mind*, his *Outline of Psychology*, and his *Outline of Abnormal Psychology*.

In the third period the attack on mechanistic theories was continued, but McDougall also became the experimentalist once more. At first sight it would seem that the attempt to demonstrate the inheritance of acquired characteristics has little connection with the philosophical and psychological principles

underlying McDougall's main work. That, however, is a superficial view. If the transmission of acquired responses can be demonstrated, it immediately becomes possible to understand how instinctive responses might come to be established as such, and to envisage evolution itself as purposive. To this period belong general statements of his position as a whole in *Modern Materialism and Emergent Evolution*, *The Frontiers of Psychology* and *The Energies of Men*.

To say that McDougall never changed his opinions would neither be true, nor would it be complimentary. He was at all times reasonable and willing to examine evidence, even though it told against his theories. Nevertheless there is a wonderful coherence and consistency in all he wrote, as far as the fundamental principles are concerned. It is because of this fact, and, following from this, the fact that his critics could only join issue with him on fundamental postulates and principles, that the controversies in which he was engaged not infrequently tended to become heated and bitter, especially during the later American period. In spite of it all his personality remained unwarped, and he remained to the end the kindly, courteous, English gentleman.

JAMES DREVER.

Dr. William McDougall was known to me by reputation as the Wilde Reader in Psychology and also by his writing previous to 1914. On the outbreak of war he first formed a field ambulance in France, but was soon given a commission and was appointed to D Block, Netley, where to the best of my belief he was rather discouraged with the treatment of cases sent there from the Front. In 1916 he was appointed to the 3rd Southern General Hospital as Officer i/c of the Shell-shock Cases. At this time there was at that hospital no definite ward or wards set apart for these cases. They were nursed as best they might be in the ordinary wards, mixed up with cases of physical illness and surgery. From his first days at the hospital he was ceaseless in reiterating the fact that it was detrimental to the treatment of these cases of psychological maladjustment to mix them with cases of ordinary illness. In 1917 he had already organized, with his colleagues, an out-patient clinic for cases in Oxford who were or had been treated for shell-shock with such success, that owing to the results obtained, the Ratcliffe Infirmary approached myself with the idea of opening a clinic at this hospital. McDougall was unceasing in his efforts to induce the authorities to open special hospitals for treatment of shell-shock, and it was largely due to his efforts that in 1918 the Ashhurst War Hospital and others were set apart for these cases. Whilst at Ashhurst he was unceasing in his efforts to encourage investigation into the causes and treatment of these mental disorders, and amongst his colleagues were several of his old pupils. McDougall was greatly interested in hypnosis, and as a hypnotist was an expert. Whilst at Ashhurst he and the other officers held fortnightly conferences in which discussions and experiments

took place. McDougall was a born investigator, and encouraged all attempts to obtain a clearer view of the unconscious mind. With his patients he was kindness itself; so honest was he that he could not understand deceit in others and in consequence was sometimes imposed upon; as an instance, on one occasion the men in his ward who were discontented with various matters of discipline complained to him that their ration of bread was invariably short. McDougall brought the matter before the authorities as a complaint, and was astounded to find that the reason the supply was short was due to the fact that the men had thrown the bread ration into the piano. He was generally popular, but at the same time intolerant of anything he considered an injustice, and at times was so vehement in his attempts to obtain what he considered justice for his patients that he on one occasion was in danger of court-martial. By the death of McDougall the profession has lost an able writer and investigator, a man who encouraged research, and who was, though a severe critic, a kindly friend and a very courteous gentleman.

T. S. Good.