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MEMOIR

OF

ISAAC RAY, M.D., LL.D.



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Read before the College of Physicians of Philadelphia,
July 6, 1881.

BY

THOMAS S. KIRKBRIDE, M.D.

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M E M O I R .

THE subject of this memoir became a Fellow of the College of Physicians in July, 1868; he was always interested in its proceedings, often reading valuable original papers, and generally participating in its discussions. The estimation in which he was held by his associates, was shown by the action of the College on the occasion of his death, and by the resolutions subsequently adopted and ordered to be entered on its minutes. It may safely be said that few men, at home or abroad, have attained a higher eminence—as members of the medical profession, as directors of institutions for the treatment of the insane, and as writers on insanity and medical jurisprudence—than Dr. Ray. He became a resident of Philadelphia in the autumn of 1867, and from that time took an active interest in whatever tended to advance the welfare and prosperity of his adopted home. He was a frequent contributor to the daily press, and almost all the subjects that were generally discussed, in one way or another, had the benefit of his mature judgment and thoughtful consideration. He was always ready to give

his time to the promotion of objects of benevolence, and to render assistance to those who were specially unfortunate, and his very extended and varied experience secured for his opinions a more than ordinary degree of respect and public confidence.

Dr. Isaac Ray was a native of Massachusetts. Born of highly respectable parents, in the town of Beverly, on the 16th of January, 1807, he there commenced his earliest education, subsequently entering Phillips Academy at Andover, and afterwards Bowdoin College, where he remained till compelled by ill health to leave his studies, which he had been prosecuting with great assiduity. As soon as his health was sufficiently restored, he began the study of medicine in the office of Dr. Hart, of Beverly, completing his studies under Dr. Shattuck, a distinguished physician in Boston, and ultimately graduating at the Medical Department of Harvard University in 1827. In that year he began the practice of his profession at Portland, Maine, and while there he delivered his first course of lectures—on Botany—a branch of science for which he had a great fondness. It was at one of these lectures that he first met the lady whom he subsequently married in 1831, Miss Abigail May Frothingham, a daughter of the late Judge Frothingham, of Portland, who still survives him, and with whom he lived in a most happy union for a period of just two months less than fifty years. From this marriage two children were born: a daughter, with rare traits of loveliness, who died at the age of fourteen, and a son, to whom fuller allusion will be made in a later part of this notice.

About two years after Dr. Ray had commenced the practice of medicine in Portland, Maine, inducements were offered to him to leave that city and settle in Eastport in

the same State, and there soon after he fixed, as he then supposed, his permanent residence.

It was at this time, while living in Eastport, that Dr. Ray first had his interest excited on the subject of insanity and the treatment of the insane, and especially in reference to matters connected with the branch of medical jurisprudence relating to it. The prevalent views on all these subjects were then far behind what are common at the present day, and led Dr. Ray to prepare a work, "The Jurisprudence of Insanity," since generally recognized as one of the highest authorities in this department of medico-legal knowledge, and quoted alike by alienists, lawyers, and all others interested in the subject, at home and abroad. No better evidence of its being generally appreciated need be given than the fact that six editions of it have been exhausted in this country, while it was a source of grief to Dr. Ray that his condition of health rendered it impossible for him to prepare a seventh, which had been asked for by his publishers, and for which he had on hand interesting and important materials. The steady increase of popularity attained by "The Jurisprudence of Insanity," as might have been anticipated, led to a change in the tone of the criticisms made in regard to it. From being originally adverse in many quarters, they became highly commendatory everywhere.

Dr. Ray was appointed Medical Superintendent of the State Hospital for the Insane at Augusta, Maine, in the year 1841, and this led to his permanent removal from Eastport. He immediately assumed the duties of this position, residing in the institution, till he was invited by the Board of Trustees of the Butler Hospital at Providence, Rhode Island—which was then about to be organized—to become its Superintendent.

The experience of hospital life and management in a State institution was of great importance to Dr. Ray. It enabled him to detect and to expose many of the weak points to which this class of hospitals is made liable, and gave to the emphatic views which he always afterwards expressed a particular value from the practical nature of the observations which had led to them. He never failed to censure in the strongest terms the evil results of a political management, of giving to the directors of such institutions a personal and pecuniary interest in their business affairs, and of confiding to those in no way qualified by education and experience the control of the important matters of treatment and government assigned to them. He was always ready to denounce an institution without a head, as much as one with many heads, as a monstrosity that could not, unless under extraordinary circumstances, be more than a very temporary success; and his enunciation of sound views on all such subjects, on all proper occasions, has exercised an important influence in every part of the country.

Dr. Ray found his position at Providence a specially pleasant one. His labor was much less arduous than it had previously been; he was enabled to carry out his own well-considered plans, and it afforded him a long-desired opportunity to visit many of the more prominent institutions for the insane in Great Britain and on the continent. The fruits of abundant practical knowledge and a careful study of the whole subject gave him special qualifications in these investigations to detect errors, to weigh the value of so-called reforms, and to make a trustworthy comparison of the actual advantages and disadvantages to be found in the institutions at home and abroad. With this view Dr. Ray sailed for Europe soon after his appointment, and in this

manner passed the summer months of 1845. He spent the next two years in superintending the erection of the Butler Hospital, which was opened for the reception of patients in 1847. Then taking up his residence in the hospital, he remained there superintending its affairs with great ability, and to the satisfaction of all who were in any way connected with it, till January, 1867, when his impaired health compelled him to resign this position to which he was so much attached, and in which he had done so much to elevate the standard of hospital treatment for the insane. This relief from labor, and from all the cares and anxieties unavoidably incident to the conscientious superintendence of a hospital of this description, made him greatly enjoy a rest, such as he had never before taken, except during his trip to Europe. He spent most of the year in visiting his professional brethren in different parts of the country, and, in selecting a place for his permanent residence, finally adopting the city of Philadelphia. Here he continued to live, at his residence on Baring Street, till his death on the morning of the 31st of March, 1881, being then in the seventy-fifth year of his age.

The change from a New England climate to that of Philadelphia, and the rest from constant labor which was now permitted him, made a great improvement in Dr. Ray's health. He increased his literary work, enjoyed engaging in matters of general public interest, and found himself able to take an amount of physical exercise to which he had of late been a stranger. His regained strength enabled him also to accept calls in consultation from his professional brethren, and especially as an expert in legal and criminal cases, in which his services were frequently solicited.

Dr. Ray was a member of many professional and scientific

associations. Wherever he was thus associated he was noted for his active interest, and for the part he took in the preparation of papers and his participation in any discussions that might take place.

He was one of the "original thirteen" superintendents who established "The Association of Medical Superintendents of American Institutions for the Insane," in 1844; was its president from 1855 to 1859; and always took a very marked interest in its proceedings. His papers read at its meetings were numerous and of great ability. Many of these cannot fail to take a permanent place in the literature of the profession. Dr. Ray formed the highest estimate of the importance of this association and of the value of the work which it had done, and especially believed that to it the insane were to look for most of the changes which were likely to be made in their care and management which could lay any claim to be for their best interests, or really worthy of the name of progress. Its "Propositions," now more than a quarter of a century old, and having stood the test of trial in every section of the country, had in him a staunch defender, and his practical knowledge and extended observation of other systems gave to his views an especial worth. At the meeting of this association at Providence, in 1879, he was the recipient of distinguished honors from his old associates and friends, from the Rhode Island State Medical Society, of which he had been president, and from Brown University, which on this occasion conferred on him the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws. Of the principles established by the association, Dr. Ray, like all his most experienced brethren, was particularly decided in regard to the importance of a proper organization. He knew from extended observation of other schemes that only a single

head, controlling, as he must have the responsibility of, all departments, can be relied on for a permanently successful administration, and he lost no suitable opportunity for enunciating this most important principle, no departure from which he believed could ever be justified as tending to promote the best interests of the insane.

Dr. Ray was one of the founders of the Social Science Association, and was always an intelligent student of every subject which came under its consideration. His papers read before it, and his views in all matters that received its attention, were distinguished for practical good sense and advanced conclusions in regard to the welfare of the community.

He was at one time a most useful member of the Board of Guardians of the Poor of Philadelphia, giving his valuable time to the duties of the post, which, conscientiously performed, could not fail to be onerous. His experience and his devotion to the insane led him to take an active part in the work of that department. He was not long in detecting its grave defects, and in suggesting the proper remedies; but the minority, with which he acted, had the power to introduce but a few of the reforms which they knew to be indispensable. It is one of the remarkable events of the times that the public authorities were willing to dispense with the unremunerated services of such a man as Dr. Ray, to make a place for some one who had not, and who from his previous life could not have, the first element of knowledge fitting him for a post, one of the most important duties of which was to secure for the insane a liberal and enlightened treatment.

Dr. Ray delivered two courses of lectures on Insanity and Medical Jurisprudence before the class of one of the medi-

cal colleges of Philadelphia, but, as usually happened in regard to his public labors of the kind, they were without compensation, and demanded an amount of time which he could ill afford to continue to give. While it must be acknowledged that it is not easy anywhere to secure such a course of instruction to students as Dr. Ray was competent to impart, still it must be conceded that lectures of this kind in every medical school would do much to advance the study of mental diseases and their treatment, would make the profession, and through it, the public, better able to detect the many defective schemes of organization now presented for hospitals for the insane, and would lead to a much higher order of discussions in many of the meetings held ostensibly for the special improvement of the care of the insane, and in others in which their management of late has seemed to be the favorite subject for consideration.

Dr. Ray was about the medium stature, but did not possess a very robust constitution. His features were marked, and his general expression grave. He had an abundance of rather stiff hair, which of late years was entirely white, and from his way of treating it, it was commonly somewhat in disorder. His manner was dignified, his language clear and distinct, and in speaking or writing he always used a pure English, and attracted the attention of his auditors no less by his personal appearance, than by his manner of delivery and the matter of his remarks.

Dr. Ray for many years had been troubled with a chronic cough, which seemed to be bronchial in its character. Although annoying, this cough did not appear materially to affect his general health, and after taking counsel from the most able of his medical brethren, he seemed to have concluded that his malady was one not likely to be removed by

treatment. The great change in Dr. Ray's health which occurred in the latter part of 1879, was evidently more the result of a great and unexpected family affliction, than of his previous condition. His only son, Dr. B. Lincoln Ray, was a highly educated physician, living with his parents in Philadelphia, greatly valued by them, and distinguished as a student and writer of very marked ability. Of vigorous personal appearance, he nevertheless was conscious for some time before his death, of an impending cerebral malady, which gave him very serious apprehensions. On the evening of the 7th of December, 1879, these indications of brain trouble were suddenly developed into an acute attack, which with great suffering ended his life in the short period of forty-two hours. To this only son his parents had looked forward, as a comfort and support in their advancing age. They had been proud of his abilities, and from his filial devotion, and as an appreciative exponent of his views, his honored father had hoped to have justice done to his labors, as an author, by one abundantly capable to give a proper exposure of those who had not hesitated to use his thoughts and occasionally his very language, while forgetting to give the slightest word of acknowledgment. It was not wonderful that the sudden death of this son, at the meridian of life, should have left results of no ordinary character. This sad event, so unlooked for, was a shock to the father, which did more to prostrate his health and strength than would have been done by years of customary labor. With his intimate friends he was still the same genial character, still interested in whatever concerned his profession or his fellow men; but he ceased to write, complained of what had formerly been a pleasure now becoming a toil to him, found his flesh wasting and his strength diminishing, and frequently

showed a sadness quite unnatural to him. Gradually he became less and less able to take his usual amount of out-door exercise, or to attend to the calls of professional business. From the early part of December, 1880, he remained in his house, still seeing his friends, interested in his books and in what was going on in the world and in his specialty, but steadily losing weight and strength. To avoid the fatigue of going up stairs, he ultimately made his library, in the second story, his lodging-room, and spent the greater part of every day at his front window in the adjoining apartment, reclining in an easy chair—a highly valued present, years before, from a beloved professional brother—and looking out from it upon what was passing on the active thoroughfare before him, and on the beautiful gardens of the houses opposite his residence. From his daily increasing weakness, his friends realized that the end must be near.

On the evening of the 31st of March, 1881, he retired at about the usual hour. After being in bed, he had one troublesome spell of coughing, but then slept quietly, only once in the early morning, inquiring the hour. So peacefully did he rest, and so calm was his sleep, that he made no sound of any kind, nor moved a muscle, as far as could be heard; and when approached somewhat later, there had been no change in his position, but life had departed, and only what was mortal remained of this noble and useful man.

Dr. Ray was a man of great versatility of talent. His ability as a writer is well known, and his conversational powers were remarkable. He had a great facility in adapting himself to any society in which he might be placed, and was equally agreeable to the grave professional man, or to the specialist, as to those of tenderest age, with whom he was usually a great favorite. While to a stranger, Dr. Ray's

manner might at first appear somewhat austere, this impression was removed by a very limited intercourse. By his intimate friends and associates he was specially honored and esteemed, and no one was more cordially welcomed in the social circle.

A list of Dr. Ray's writings, which has been preserved, shows how industrious an author he was, and how multifarious were the subjects in which he took an interest. From 1828, when his first publication of which any record has been kept, was made, down to 1880, during which year he furnished his last contributions to the press, it will be seen by the following list, that but a single year passed in which something original was not noted.

LIST OF THE PUBLISHED WRITINGS OF THE LATE
ISAAC RAY, M.D., LL.D.

1828. Review of Lawrence's Lectures. American Quarterly Review, June.
1829. Conversations on the Animal Economy. 16mo. Portland.
Review of Bakewell's Geology. American Quarterly Review, September.
On the Origin of the American Aborigines. Yankee.
Address on Temperance. Eastport Sentinel, October.
1831. Review of Combe's Constitution of Man. Christian Examiner, July.
1832. Case of Emphysema Uteri. Boston Medical Magazine, October.
1833. Review of Testimony in case of alleged Murder. Boston Medical Magazine, July.
Reply to North American Review on the merits of Spurzheim. Boston Medical Magazine, November.
Case of Malformation of the Heart. Boston Medical Magazine, December.
1834. Review of Decandolle's *Théorie élémentaire*. North American Review, January.
Review of Combe's Phrenology. Christian Examiner, May.
Review of Combe and Caldwell on Popular Education. Annals of Phrenology, November.
1835. Notice of case of Major Mitchell. Annals of Phrenology, November.
Lecture on Criminal Law of Insanity. American Jurist, October (No. 28).
Obituary of Dr. B. Lincoln. New England Magazine.
Translation of the fourth and latter half of the sixth volume of Gall's "*Sur les Fonctions du Cerveau, etc.*"
1836. On the Criminal Law of Insanity, being a reply to G. T. C. American Jurist, October (No. 31).
1837. Homicidal Insanity. American Jurist, January (No. 32).
1838. Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity. 8vo. Boston.
Notice of Dr. Woodward's Report. American Jurist, October (No. 39).

1839. Notice of Pechot's Case. *American Jurist*, October (No. 43).
1840. Review of Mittermaier on Criminal Responsibility. *American Jurist*, January (No. 44).
1841. On Medical Evidence. *American Jurist*, January (No. 48).
1842. Report of Maine Insane Hospital for 1841.
1843. Report of Maine Insane Hospital for 1842.
Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity. Second edition. 12mo.
1844. Report of Maine Insane Hospital for 1843.
1845. Report of Maine Insane Hospital for 1844.
Review of Roger's Trial. *Law Reporter*, February.
1846. Observations on foreign Hospitals for the Insane. *American Journal of Insanity*, April.
Review of Trial of Abner Baker. *American Journal of Insanity*, July.
Review of Madness or Maniac's Hall. *American Journal of Insanity*, October.
1847. Shakspeare's Delineations of Insanity. *American Journal of Insanity*, April.
Criminal Law of Insanity. *Law Reporter*. May and July.
Illustrations of Insanity by distinguished English authors. *American Journal of Insanity*, October.
1848. Legislation for the Insane in Maine. *American Journal of Insanity*, January.
Description of Butler Hospital. *American Journal of Insanity*, July.
Contract contested on the ground of Insanity. *American Journal of Insanity*, October.
1849. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1848.
Statistics of Insane Hospitals. *American Journal of Insanity*, July.
The Hinchman Case. *Law Reporter*, August.
1850. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1849.
Project of a Law for regulating the legal relations of the Insane. *Law Reporter*, September.
1851. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1850.
Epidemic Monomania. *Christian Examiner*, May.

- Education in relation to the health of the Brain 24mo.
pp. 56.
- Hints to Medical Witnesses. American Journal of Insanity.
July.
1852. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1851.
On the popular feeling towards Hospitals for the Insane.
American Journal of Insanity, July.
Trial of Furbush. American Journal of Insanity, October.
1853. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1852.
Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity, Third edition.
Undescribed forms of Acute Mania. American Journal of
Insanity, October.
1854. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1853.
American Hospitals for the Insane. North American Re-
view, July.
Etherization in the treatment of Insanity. American Jour-
nal of Insanity, July.
1855. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1854.
Notice of Tuke on Non-restraint. American Journal of
Insanity, April.
Insanity of George III. American Journal of Insanity,
July.
1856. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1855.
Insanity and Homicide. American Journal of Insanity,
January.
Review of Report of Commissioners on Insanity in Massa-
chusetts. North American Review, January.
Review of Wharton on Mental Unsoundness. American
Journal of Insanity, January.
1857. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1856.
1858. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1857.
Opinion in Parish Will Case.
Review of Buckle's History of Civilization. North Ameri-
can Review, October.
1859. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1858.
Medical Testimony in jury trials. Law Reporter, July.
1860. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1859.
Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity, fourth edition.

1861. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1860.
Objections to Moral Insanity. *American Journal of Insanity*, October.
1862. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1861.
Cerebral Dynamics. *Atlantic Monthly*, August.
1863. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1862.
Discourse on Life and Character of Dr. Bell.
Doubtful Recoveries. *American Journal of Insanity*, July.
Angell Will Case. *American Journal of Insanity*, October.
Mental Hygiene, 16mo.
1864. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1863.
Report on a Project of a Law for the Insane. *American Journal of Insanity*, July.
1865. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1864.
Review of Redfield on Wills. *American Journal of Insanity*, April.
Case of Bernard Cangle. *American Journal of Insanity*, July.
1866. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1865.
Insanity of Women produced by Desertion. *American Journal of Insanity*, October.
1867. Report of Superintendent of Butler Hospital for 1866.
Report on Insanity in *Transactions of American Medical Association*, Vol. XVIII.
Epilepsy—Homicide. *American Journal of Insanity*, October.
Articles in *Bouvier's Law Dictionary*, viz.: Apoplexy and Paralysis, Delirium Febrile, Delirium Tremens, Drunkenness, Insanity, Lucid Intervals, Mania, Somnambulism, Suicide.
1868. Review of Griesinger on Insanity. *American Journal of Insanity*, April.
Delusions considered as a test of Insanity. *American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, July.
A Modern "Lettre de Cachet" reviewed. *Atlantic Monthly*, August.
1869. Review of Discussion on Moral Insanity. *American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, January.

- Confinement of the Insane. American Law Review, January.
 Hereditary Insanity. North American Review, July.
1870. Review of Ordonaux on Jurisprudence of Insanity, American Journal of the Medical Sciences, January.
 Law of Insanity. American Law Review, January.
 Trial of Andrews. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, April.
 Prognosis of Insanity. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, October.
 Mordaunt Divorce Case. Medical Times, October 15.
1871. Review of Blandford on Insanity. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, April.
 Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity, fifth edition.
 Habeas Corpus. Medical Times, April 15.
 Pathological Psychology. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, January.
 Opinion in *Pidcock v. P.*, Pennsylvania State Reports, Vol. LXIX.
1872. Review of Fisher's Plain Talks about Insanity. Medical Times, May 1.
1873. Insane Convicts. Medical Times, March 22.
 Legislation on Expert Testimony. Medical Times, March 29.
 Review of Tuke's Body and Mind. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, April.
 Review of Reynolds' Legal Tests of Insanity. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, April.
 Contributions to Mental Pathology. 8vo.
 Ideal Characters of Officers of a Hospital for the Insane.
 What shall Philadelphia do with its Paupers? (Philadelphia Social Science Association. Penn Monthly.
1874. Legislation for the Insane. Medical Times.
 Review of Denny's Government of Insane Hospitals. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, July.
 Review of Bucknill and Tuke on Insanity. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, October.
 Homicide and Suspected Simulation. American Journal of Insanity, October.
1875. Duncan Will Case. American Journal of Insanity, January.
 Review of Kroft Ebing on Responsibility of the Insane. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, July.

- Ventilation of Hospitals. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, October.
- London Lancet on American Management of the Insane. Medical Times, December 25.
- Brain Disease and Modern Living (Philadelphia Social Science Association). Penn Monthly.
1876. Review of Morel's Works. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, January.
- Review of Plans of Johns Hopkins Hospital. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, April.
- Review of the Forty-sixth Report of the Inspectors of the Eastern Penitentiary. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, July.
1877. Review of Ordonaux on the Proper Status of the Insane. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, January.
- Lecture on Testamentary Capacity. Sanitarian, October.
- Review of Folsom on Diseases of the Mind. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, October.
- The Responsibility of the Insane for their Criminal Acts, Transactions of the International Medical Congress of Philadelphia.
1878. Review of Tuke on Insanity and its Prevention. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, July.
- New Hospital for the Insane. Medical Times.
- Cost of Constructing Hospitals. Chicago Journal of Mental and Nervous Diseases.
- Review of Clarke on Visions. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, October.
- Notice of Billings's Report on Ventilation. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, October.
1879. Notice of Lindsay and Boddington on Restraint. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, January.
- Parliamentary Commission Lunacy Laws. American Journal of the Medical Sciences, April.
- Recoveries from Mental Disease. Transactions of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia. Third series, Vol. IV.
1880. Isolation of Persons in Hospitals for the Insane. Penn Monthly, January.

