

OBITUARIES

Mr. H. Havelock Ellis

BY the death on July 8 of Henry Havelock Ellis, both science and literature have sustained a heavy loss. Havelock Ellis was born at Croydon eighty years ago. At sixteen years of age, owing to ill-health, he was sent to Australia, and later became an assistant schoolmaster in a suburb of Sydney. During a lonely adolescence he was greatly troubled by moral and spiritual difficulties, and decided to devote his life to systematic inquiries that should make clear to himself and to others the real nature of the problems of sex. With this in view he returned to London, and trained as a general practitioner at St. Thomas's Hospital.

After a few months in general practice, literary and scientific activities began to absorb all Havelock Ellis's time. He became editor of the "Contemporary Scientific Series" and co-editor of the "Mermaid Series" of old dramatists; and was soon widely known as a critic and essayist, and later as a popular philosopher and an interpreter of the national genius of France and Spain. His books on "The World of Dreams", "Man and Woman", "The Criminal", "A Study of British Genius", revealed his strong psychological interests and his gift for impartially collecting scientific observations and expounding scientific facts in a lucid and impartial way.

In a long list of publications, the most important work written by Havelock Ellis was that entitled "Studies in the Psychology of Sex". There is no need to repeat the oft-told story of the prosecution of its publisher, and the founding of a defence committee which included George Moore, William Sharp and Bernard Shaw. In spite of judicial condemnation, the volumes might have been seen on the shelves of most British psychologists at the beginning of this century; and his influence undoubtedly paved the way for the sympathetic interest aroused by Freud's more startling doctrines later on. Freud himself, indeed, has more than once acknowledged the value of Havelock Ellis's pioneer work.

Unlike Freud, Ellis was more interested in collecting data than in constructing theories. The results of psychological tests were duly reported in his pages whenever they were obtainable; but since experimental work was only in its infancy when he wrote, his books will remain a collection of suggestive observations rather than of experimentally verified facts. His views on crime, on genius, on the mental differences between the sexes, though still freely quoted, can no longer be regarded as representing the results of the latest researches. Nevertheless, his lucid and delightful style, and the charm of personality that shines through it, will keep his psychological writings alive and influential when the publications of the academic psychologists of his day lie dead and forgotten.

Dr: Henry Correvon

THOUGH better known as a horticulturist than as a botanist, Henry Correvon made considerable contributions by his numerous publications to botanical science. His death in his eighty-fifth year on May 11 leaves a notable gap among the devotees of alpine plants, whom he has done so much to encourage and assist by his own enthusiastic labours.

Born at Iverdon in 1854, Correvon was educated in this little Swiss town, and, losing his father at an early age, was sent to learn horticultural practice first to Geneva, then to Zurich, Frankfurt, Erfurt and finally to the Jardin des Plantes in Paris, where he received botanical as well as horticultural training. Thus well equipped, he returned to Iverdon to take charge of the horticultural establishment founded by his grandfather, which had suffered greatly from the neglect of the tenant who had carried on the undertaking. Capable and energetic, Correvon commenced to work up this family heritage, but, alas, only to see most of his improvements totally destroyed by a devastating cyclone in July 1877. The low-growing alpine plants alone survived the ravages of the storm. He transferred his energies to Geneva, where he established a nursery for alpine plants, in the cultivation of which he was so successful that he ultimately purchased in 1902 a large vineyard at Chêne-Bourg high above Geneva. Here he created the wonderful garden "La Floraire" known to all cultivators of alpine gardens. To it he had transported limestone rocks from the Salève and the Jura and granite blocks from the Alps so as to have suitable surroundings for his pet plants.

Correvon's interest in these was not limited to those in his own garden. He was one of the originators of "La Linnea", the alpine garden at Bourg St. Pierre, now under the management of the University of Geneva. He was also concerned in the management of the alpine garden on the Rochers de Naye above Montreux and for a time with that above Saint-Cergue. His love for these, and other efforts for the preservation of the mountain plants, made him a prime mover in the formation of the Swiss Nature Protection Society.

Alphonse de Candolle persuaded Correvon to learn English, and for some years he acted as a correspondent of the *Garden*. In 1886 he visited England and wrote enthusiastically about some of the gardens he saw, and spoke with admiration particularly of the cultivation of the terrestrial orchids by various British horticulturists. This group of plants was particularly dear to him and led to his publication of a little book in 1893 on "Les Orchidées rustiques", followed in 1899 by his "Album des Orchidées", of which a second edition has appeared. His publications were, however, not limited to orchids. They included books on trees, ferns, flowers