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## In Memoriam

HUGO EHRENFEST

1870-1942

**H**UGO EHRENFEST died July 24, 1942. Although he had in the past few years had occasional symptoms of angina, this had not incapacitated him from his duties as obstetrician and co-editor of the *JOURNAL*. After the usual busy morning at the hospital and in the office he went home to take his afternoon siesta and without arousing passed peacefully from slumber to death.

Born in Vienna 72 years ago, he took his doctor's degree at the University in that city in 1894. He served as assistant in Professor Schauta's obstetrical clinic at the Allgemeine Krankenhaus from 1896 to 1899. In 1900 he came to America and settled in St. Louis, where his friend, the late George Gellhorn, well-known gynecologist, had preceded him by one year. He rapidly adapted himself to his new home, and in 1904 married Sophie Schwab, a member of an old St. Louis family, who with two sons and a daughter survive him. He rapidly became a leader in his specialty. In 1904 he was appointed assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology at St. Louis University and in 1907 was elected a Fellow of the American Gynecological Society, serving as vice-president of this Society in 1921. He was also a member of the Central Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the St. Louis Gynecological Society. From 1904 to 1920 he taught at St. Louis University School of Medicine, being head of his department for a large part of that period. In 1922 he became associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology at Washington University School of Medicine, where he was engaged in teaching until the time of his death. From 1936 on he held the title of Professor Emeritus. His hospital appointments were at Jewish Hospital, St. Louis Maternity Hospital, and Barnes Hospital.

From 1908 until he retired as consultant in 1936, he directed the organization and policies of the division of obstetrics and gynecology at the Jewish Hospital and was largely instrumental in setting up the standards at that institution.

His contributions to the literature of our specialty were numerous. He wrote chapters in Peterson's "Textbook of Obstetrics," in Davis' "Obstetrics and Gynecology" in Nelson's "Loose-Leaf Practice of Medicine," and in Crossen's "Diseases of Women," besides writing many journal articles. In 1925 he translated and prepared an American edition of Koehler's "Therapy of Puerperal Fever."

As a scientist Ehrenfest concentrated his interest in the field of obstetrics. He contributed much to the technique of pelvimetry and to the knowledge of the diseases complicating pregnancy, but his most outstanding work was his volume on "Birth Injuries of the Child," contributed to the Appleton Monograph series (1922). He was literally an encyclopedia of knowledge on almost every subject in obstetrics. It was this painstaking and comprehensive investigation combined with an ability to analyze and correlate his data that has made the monograph on birth injuries the outstanding work on this subject.

His teaching experience dated back to 1904. During the 16 years he served as professor at St. Louis University and the 20 years he was teaching at Washington University, he instructed many students of medicine. His influence in the development of sane, conservative obstetrics in this large group was most beneficial. He scrupulously avoided fads and opposed the indiscriminate use of twilight sleep, cesarean section, Dührssen incisions, etc. "Meddlesome midwifery" was in his opinion the cause of the persistently high maternal and infant mortality, and in the well-known Conference on Child Welfare held in President Hoover's administration, he was chairman of the special committee dealing with this subject. He was an unusually effective teacher not merely because of the clear analytical method of expressing his ideas but because of the droll and amusing way in which he embellished them from the wealth of his personal experience.

Even more important than his contributions as scientist and teacher was his work as editor. With amazing rapidity after coming to this country, he acquired a mastery of the English language and correct diction. It was not long before he was correcting our use of English instead of our correcting his. As one of the editors of the *Interstate Medical Journal*, and since 1920 as associate editor and later as co-editor of the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY, he spent a lifetime in correcting and clarifying innumerable scientific articles contributed to these journals. The number of grammatical errors in our papers that he has picked up and deleted are legion. We should all of us be grateful to him for having helped us in this thankless job of making our contributions more intelligible and less wordy.

To those who knew Hugo Ehrenfest intimately, he was a man of many accomplishments and a genial personality. The charm of Vienna, where so many of us spent happy and profitable days in the past, was mirrored in his activities. Music was his diversion. He spent many hours at the piano and often had the leading members of the Symphony Orchestra at his home. Simple and unassuming, he had a keen sense of humor and a spirit of kindness toward all. We shall long miss his presence at our meetings.

*Fred. J. Taussig, M.D.*

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### A TRIBUTE

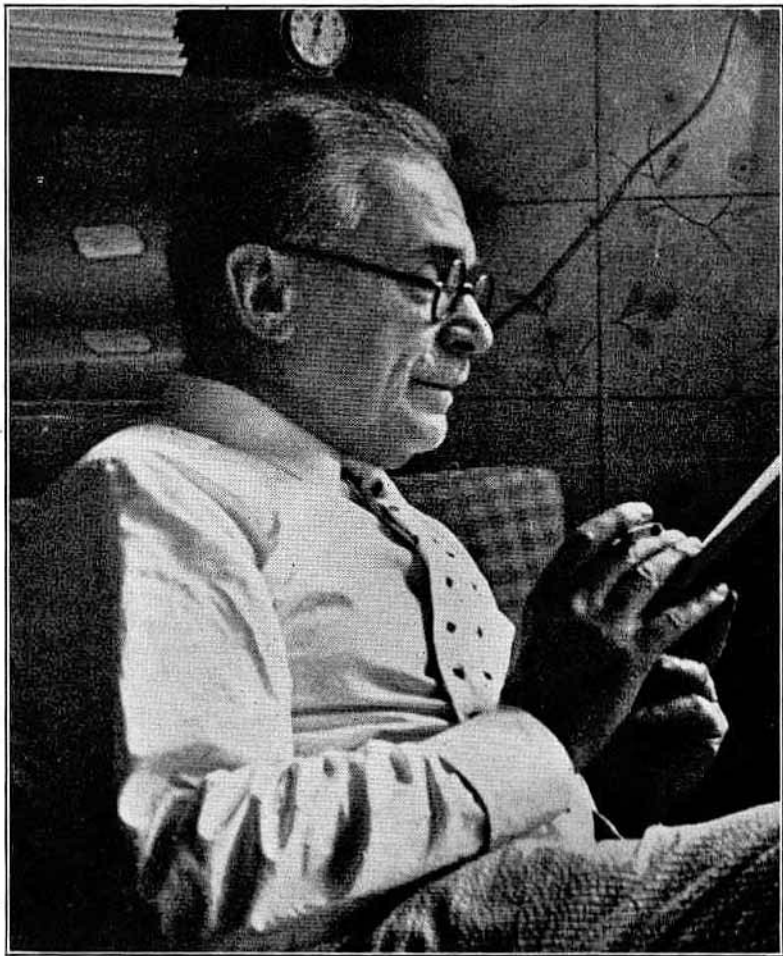
Hugo Ehrenfest was my valued friend and associate in the Editorship of the Journal since its founding in 1920. Among other tasks he developed the important Department of Abstracts and Reviews, and conducted it with unfailing skill because of his wide reading and his knowledge of the world's medical literature.

The many trials and tribulations connected with the editorial conduct of a widely circulated journal with its host of contributors, afforded many occasions on which his advice and suggestions were of utmost value and assistance.

Moreover by his lovable personality, his modesty, his cheerfulness, his always ready spirit of cooperation and his kindly disposition, Dr. Ehrenfest endeared himself to all the members of the Editorial and Publication Staffs of the Journal, who mourn deeply his sudden and untimely death. His many good deeds, his unselfish character, his sympathetic attitude, will all contribute to the happy memories and the esteem in which he was held by his many personal friends and associates. His loss is keenly felt.

*George W. Kosmak, M.D.*





**Hugo Ehrenfest**

**1870—1942**