The principles of psychology are as old as mankind itself yet as an independent science psychology is one of the youngest. This paradoxical state of affairs can be readily understood by a brief review of its interesting history—from psychology as a division of philosophy to the scientific psychological knowledge gained almost exclusively during the past 100 years which has established psychology in its current position pre-eminent among the Behavioural Sciences.

Throughout the ages—from the Graeco-Roman era until the latter part of the nineteenth century, psychology existed as an integral and essential division of philosophy. In ancient times, Plato, the father of philosophy, emphasized the importance and superiority of mental processes. His views inspired much psychological inquiry and no little psychological speculation. His teachings on the immortality and special qualities of the psyche or soul (in marked contradistinction to the soma or body) have been severely misrepresented in medical thought which leaned so heavily and for so long upon the false concept of a dichotomy of mind and body. Today we are only just emerging from these prejudices.

Aristotle, Plato's pupil, produced among many impressive works, his important treatise on the mind De Anima and also his classical psychological essay on 'Memory'. The Pythagorean School had accurately postulated that the seat of the mind could be found in the brain—as opposed to the many fanciful and ingenious loci throughout the
body which had been advanced. Hippocrates, in addition to his impor- 
tant studies in inherited factors and predispositions to mental illness, 
taught on the disorders of cerebral function and their role in mental 
illness and in sanity.

With its traditional approach to the exploration of new frontiers of 
knowledge and with its formidable prestige in learning, it is easy to 
visualize how philosophy influenced, overshadowed, and even retarded, 
all psychological thought to the seventeenth-century philosophers and 
beeyond. Change was, however, coming. The views of the British 
seventeenth-century philosophers Hobbes and Locke, which favoured 
the concept of association in explaining learning and remembering, 
initiated a gradual emergence of the first and senior, if poorly defined, 
school of psychology, the Associationist School.

The Associationist School (p. 151) gained and maintained its ascen- 
dancy in psychological thought throughout the eighteenth and greater 
part of the nineteenth centuries. But by the latter part of the nineteenth 
century, many of those who pursued the new and engaging lines of 
psychological inquiry had grown grossly dissatisfied with the traditional 
methods of philosophic thought and exploration (so characteristically 
employed by the associationists) and which relied on subjective intro- 
spection. They found such methods outdated and unsympathetic to the 
new climate of scientific discovery from which were emerging so many 
of the sister disciplines of research. The revolutionary advances in the 
fields of physiology, biology, physics, and chemistry impinged inex- 
orably upon the nature and methods of psychological study.

It was Wilhelm Wundt in 1879 who set up the first psychological 
laboratory at Leipzig. In so doing he dramatically marked the dawn of 
a new era in psychological research by founding the new science of 
experimental psychology. The far reaching effects of the atomic theory 
of chemistry, whereby seemingly incomprehensible matter could be 
explained in terms of elements, atoms and molecules, had already 
inspired great hopes that mental processes might likewise be reduced 
to basic units and then subsequently synthesized to more complex 
forms. In marked contrast to the philosophic approach which relied 
upon imaginative, subjective and questionable introspection, Wundt 
now required in his laboratory factual, objective data measured by 
experiment. Wundt's theories, which stressed the synthesis of conscious 
experience from sensations and feelings, were further developed by 
the Structural School of Psychology born in Germany and in the