

The Osler Library
McGill University
Montreal, Canada
4 July, 1933

Dr. G. K. Chalmers,
3, Park Street,
South Hadley, Mass.

Dear Doctor Chalmers:

Congratulations on the Ph.D. A very well deserved one. You say it gives you the privilege of misspelling words. I have no quarrel with that, but does it also entitle you to put "Memorial" into the title of my library, and leave out the very essential McGill University from the address? I happened into my deserted flat this morning and found your good letter, which has been reposing there for some days. The postoffice knows nothing of the Osler Library and refuses to learn where it is. I have heard dear old Dr. Welch humourously complain that even in his lifetime people will speak of his as the Welch Memorial Library.

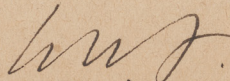
We are at present in the country, at Como, P.Q., about thirty miles out. I come in every day except Saturday and Sunday. On the 15th we go to Nova Scotia for a month, so I hope you will come either within the next ten days or towards the end of August. But if that is not convenient, you know your way about the Library, and my assistant, Miss Brownlee, will be here. Still, I should hate to miss your visit. If there should be any chance of your being here next Saturday or Sunday you had better let me know because the building is closed on those days during the summer. I would gladly come in from the country to meet you and let you in, particularly if you are bringing your wife along. I am very anxious to meet her. I also want to know something about Sir T. B.'s idea of hieroglyphics.

I sincerely hope your book will be accepted. I know it would be in ordinary times, and if they are too poor to print it now I trust it may not have to wait for the Horatian nine years.

That was a fine suggestion of yours about Struble. He would evidently be the man to edit the Sale Catalogue. I have never felt competent to do it properly and the matter has simply dragged. The Curators (trustees) of the Library are unwilling to allow the book out and had me enquire whether a facsimile edition if required could not be made from photographs taken here. I thought not but it seems that it could be done. Let me know what you hear from Struble and from Crawley. John Fulton goes to Europe for a month at the end of July.

Congratulations again and all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,



HARVARD UNIVERSITY
CAMBRIDGE

3 Park Street,
South Hadley,
Massachusetts.
June 29, 1933.

Dear Dr. Francis,

The ordeal is over and I'm rewarded with the wonderful privilege of administering the dose to anyone else who cares to take it - and also of misspelling words; why shouldn't I? I'm a PhD. But my manuscript still has me sitting on the edge of my chair. Dr. Sarton, John Fulton, and Professor Lowes have all written to the History of Science Society or the Oxford Press or both; the three volumes have been examined by Mr. Brasch and by him expressed to G.S. Brett of Toronto. Professor Brett has had them for about a month, and I'm still crossing my thumbs.

If he likes the book and can find the money, Mrs. Chalmers and I will probably pay you a visit - at last she'll see the Osler Library, most of which she has visited ghostily many times. In truth we may come, whether or no. I'm working on a paper on Sir Tom's misinformation on hieroglyphics, and it may bring me in your direction. When will you go on your holiday? and will you be there all the rest of the time? One of these hot days we might take it into our heads to drive up; would that be sinful in us?

What is the state of the Osler Library edition of Sir Thomas Browne's Sale Catalogue? I fear that our breakfast in New Haven hasn't yet produced results. Or am I mistaken, and have you or Cawley been able to turn to the job? If what is needed is still someone who will do the chief work, I think I have found the man. Mr. Lowes showed me a Wisconsin thesis on the Pseudodoxia by George G. Struble, which includes a detailed study of the Catalogue, cross references to Browne's use of many of the books in his writings, an analysis of the books read to him by Elizabeth Lyttleton, a list of books which other evidence shows that he read, and a few critical remarks about Browne's library. The body of this part of Struble's study is an alphabetical list of Browne's books by authors with comments - a very workmanlike job.

Why don't we ask Struble to go to New Haven and see John Fulton and then to see you in Montreal; if he seems capable of doing it, he might then start work on a thorough edition of the catalogue. You might supply notes and advice wherever you thought them necessary and Cawley might write an introduction. If I could help any I'd be glad to supply a note or two here and there.

Mr. Lowes agrees that the catalogue would be of great value to all sorts of scholars and gives the project his blessing. Professor Miles Hanley of Wisconsin (temporarily at Harvard) also wants to see the book published. I have written to Struble (he is George G. Struble, Lebanon Valley College, Annville, Pa) to ask if he is interested in the scheme and if he would be willing to help in some capacity or other. I suppose I ought to have word from Cawley in London before I say anything more definite to him. I'll write to Cawley and John Fulton about it immediately.

With the best of good wishes to you and ~~an~~ à bientôt,
I sign myself, your most humble servant,

Gordon K. Chalmers

*This refers to the line in
the verses in R.M.I. 13.
#4420, p.28.*

The Osler Library
McGill University
Montreal, Canada
18 March, 1933

Gordon K. Chalmers Esq.,
3, Park Street,
South Hadley, Mass.

My dear Chalmers:

I received your telegram at 10:00 o'clock
this morning, and answered it about 11:30 as follows:

Comma after them in seven earlier editions
but none in the quarto of sixteen seventy-two
then comma after thee in sixteen seventy-eight
and eighty-two.

I hope this answer is not ambiguous. It
means that in the seven editions (Osler nos. 4420-4427, Keynes
3-9), beginning with the 1643 one, the line reads, "That learning
them, in thee I may proceed." The first variation occurs in the
1672 edition (Osler 4428, Keynes 10) which is in quarto appended
to the pseudodoxia. In the next two editions (Osler 4429-4430,
Keynes 11-12), 1678 and 1682, the line reads "That learning them
in thee, I may proceed."

As you doubtless know, these verses do not
occur in the manuscripts or the surreptitious editions. There is
nothing about that comma in the Errata in the 1643 edition, and I
do not know the authority for the change. Perhaps it is significant
that the comma after "them" is first deleted in the edition printed
with the 1672 Pseudodoxia which has the author's postscript ending,
"these are to advertise thee, that this Edition comes forth with
very many Explanations, Additions, and Alterations throughout,
besides that of one entire Chapter: But that now this Work is compleat
and perfect, expect no further Additions." The next two editions,
the first to have the comma after "thee", are from a new publisher,
R. Scot.

In connection with the 1678 edition, the first
to have the comma after "thee", Keynes quotes Greenhill as follows:
"with several alterations in the text, ~~some~~ of which may have been
accidental, while others can hardly have been made during the author's
life without his authority.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

L. W. F.

21 . 1 . 33.

MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE
South Hadley, Massachusetts

Department of English

My dear A. Francis,
your letter brought with it one
from Mr. Barnes containing his manuscript.
Many many thanks! It was awfully kind
of him and of you, too. The article is just
what I had hoped it would be; I've
taken what I want and sent it back
by registered mail.

I do nothing but send you
requests; when one's time draws near
his manners all flee. Do you happen to
remember a description of Sir Tom's house
somewhere? I have Evelyn's, of course,
telling of the collections of birds eggs. But
I have a dim memory of another, a description
especially of his books piled on the floor and

a general clutter of stuff both literary and
scientific in every room. If you don't, I'll
be writing to you again soon about Parley and
the Sale catalogue, and when I do with the
time enough to bother telling me. But
if you do, I promise you a dance extraordinary.

Do you see Pariseau? Greet him in
a well-turned Rabelaisian phrase, for me,
will you please. I like to think of him.

Yours sincerely and with a grateful
heart,

Gordon K. Chalmers

January 2nd
3 Pauls St

26 Jan. 1933

Gordon K. Chalmers Esq.,
3, Park St.,
South Hadley, Mass.

My dear Chalmers:

I do not remember, and cannot find, any description of the contents of Sir T. B.'s house other than Evelyn's. The "books piled on the floor" may possibly be an echo in your memory of a note in our catalogue under #4540-A about the 100,000 books of Crossley, the early critic of Browne and the author of "Fragments on Mummies". That is how he kept his, according to the D.N.B. Charles Williams, however, in his "Souvenir of Sir Thomas Browne", Norwich, 1903, gives a picture of Browne's house at Norwich as it existed in his day, and of a very fine mantelpiece in the drawing-room, from a sketch made before the house was demolished in 1845, and also a photograph of the same carved mantelpiece in its present position in the Hall at Stoke Holy Cross near Norwich, whither it was removed. He quotes Evelyn's description and I am pretty sure if there were any other he would have known of and included it.

I once got excited in reading the end of the Life of Walter Charleton in the D.N.B., p. 119 of the old edition, where Norman Moore lists among the contents of C's "Commonplace Book" in the B.M., "A Catalogue of Sir T. Browne's Museum and of his pictures". Alas, it turned out to be simply extracts from his Musaeum clausum!!

I do not see nearly enough of Pariseau but will try to think up a suitable greeting. Does your letter give him an x at the end of his name or is it simply a deletion? He is unfortunately not plural but very singular

Yours sincerely,

L. W. F.

MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE
SOUTH HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS

17.1.33.

My dear Dr. Francis,

Some time ago when I was talking with Dr. Sartor in Cambridge he showed me the MS. of an article on Sin Thomas Brown's treatment of adipocire in Hydrostaphis written by William H. Barnes, Lecturer in Chemistry in McGill. I think Dr. Sartor is going to publish the paper sometime in the future, but I doubt if it will be ready for me to see (I'm hoping to be done in a month!). I understood from him that Mr. Barnes's conclusions show Sin Tom to have understood the subject, which he first recognized, but this I should like to be certain, and I did not have an opportunity to read Mr. Barnes's paper. Also, I should like to have his permission to refer to it.

Do you know the gentleman? It occurred to me that you might, especially because he has been working on Sin Thomas Brown. If you do and it would be no great trouble, would

you be so kind as to tell him what I want?
in an introductory chapter on how far one
may consider Browne a scientist I should
like to refer to this if possible. Please don't
go to any inconvenience, however.

I had John Fulton & Robert Canby for breakfast
in New Haven during the Modern Language
meetings, and I wish you had been there. The
substance of our talk you already have, for Fulton,
in true Fulton style, dictated a letter to you
while Canby and I dug into his library and
he gathered up a brief case full of stuff to
take to New York. I do hope the Sale Catalogue
is published; and I hope it has as many
notes identifying the items and describing them
as can be neatly added after the text. Young
scholars of all sorts - and mature ones, too, no
doubt - will be greatly helped by the mere
suggestions a list like that one brings to their work.
It would be useful for almost any problem
of analysis in 17th Century literature. Obviously
there is no limit to the notes that could be
put to the catalogue; in truth there is hardly a
limit to the notes that would be of value. Practically,
I think it would be a good thing if you
could inform the reader concerning whatever

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MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE
SOUTH HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS

you think is interesting among the items. That, for instance, is the knowledge I'd like to have at my disposal in the things I am doing.

Her Fulton told you about his new house - I daresay it is not new, and probably you've been out there. I hadn't been out for a couple of years, and found it all different - a wide porticoed place on the top of a stony woods. It overlooks the sound and spreads out inside with built-in white shelves in the drawing room. He has taken his Lin TB's and other treasures out there. A delightful place. There was a fine old Doctor Mack for dinner, with whom I had great fun extracting from him stories of Harvard.

My warmest regards to yours as well as you. I'm still an ambitious of having you here for a visit; please remember how conveniently we're situated on the map.

Yours sincerely,

Frederic K. Chelmers

Jan 17, 1933

20 Jan. 1933

Gordon K. Chalmers Esq.,
Mount Holyoke College,
South Hadley, Mass.

My dear Chalmers:

Do I know the gentleman? I do, and "gentleman" is the right word. I saw Dr. Barnes yesterday after receiving your letter and he promptly decided that the best thing to do would be to send you the only typed copy he has of his paper. I had not time to read it but I gathered that B considers Browne to have been the scientific discoverer of adipocere and that he has not been able to confirm an obscure reference somebody made to a supposed description of it by Bacon.

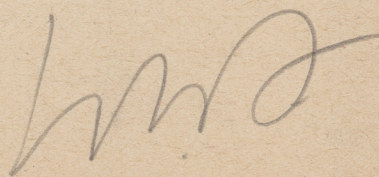
I told John Fulton recently that I had postponed any interest in the Sale-catalogue until after the annual meeting of my committee next week. His idea seems to be that I should edit the publication and supply an introduction, you and Mr. Cawley supplying me with notes. I should be glad to give any help I can but I think it would be better if one of you fellows who have really worked on the literature of that period took the responsibility for the editing and left me for my part to supply simply the facsimile and some notes on the identification of the medical books.

A really full and satisfactory edition, it seems to me, would be a long job. A simple facsimile with introduction and index of authors would be useful; but when you come to add notes of identification, etc., it is apt to develop into a more or less complete modern annotated catalogue. And that, as I well know, is a job of a job. However, I expect more stimuli from J.F. in the near future.

I am glad to have your account of Mill Rock, Deep End Dive (as I think the address ought to be). I only saw the outside of it when I was in New Haven before they moved in.

I and my family reciprocate your very kind regards. We are flourishing, also your friends the Skeltons, below us.

Yours sincerely,



The Osler Library
McGill University
Montreal, Canada
10 September, 1934

Mr. Gordon K. Chalmers,
Rockford College,
R o c k f o r d, Ill.

Dear Chalmers:

Hearty congratulations, first on the Ph.D. which I knew must have come to you by this time, particularly after that skillfully worded telegram about the coma in Sir T.B.'s verse! And secondly on the Presidency. Surely it is given to few men to inaugurate their doctoral career with the presidency of a college. Beginning thus, I wonder where you will end. In my abysmal ignorance I was a bit hazy about Rockford but I see from Minerva that it has a venerable antiquity for Illinois.

Congratulations also to Mrs. Chalmers, who, I am sure, counts for something in your sky-rocket career.

No excitement lately in the Browne corner since Fulton announced his discovery of two more copies of the Sale-Catalogue. - One, of course, is his own possession, and the other ~~is~~ at Worcester Cathedral. At present I am picking holes in the proofs of a Fracastoro bibliography which he has in the press.

With kind regards to you both,

Yours sincerely,

W. W. F.

The Osler Library
McGill University,
Montreal, Canada
18 Sept., 1934

Dr. Gordon K. Chalmers,
Rockford College,
R o c k f o r d, Ill.

Dear Chalmers:

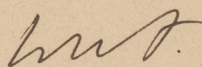
Thanks for your letter. I shall be looking out for reprints of your papers and for the text of the book when you have revised it. I assure you you cannot "plague" me with it.

I am afraid there is no possible chance of my being at the "hub-bub", as you call it, nor of my coming later to talk about Osler, as you kindly suggest. I have a fond hope of getting through life without ever seeing Chicago. This is sheer prejudice. I am not alarmed by your threat to meet me at the Union Station with a straight jacket, but would not a bullet-proof waistcoat be more appropriate?

I cannot find that I have made any record of the whereabouts of that fourth copy of the Sale-Catalogue. I am sure it was Worcester, but whether Cathedral or College I shall have to ask Fulton. I have not heard anything more about the facsimile of it but I believe that F. is keeping his copy unbound with a view to using it for this purpose.

With kind regards to you both and best wishes for a happy and successful presidency,

Yours sincerely,



PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
ROCKFORD COLLEGE
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS

September
Twelfth
1934

Dear Dr. Francis:

Thanks for your letter and my thanks to Minerva for setting you right about Rockford.

Fulton's other Sale-Catalogue is at Worcester College, is it not? or are you right in thinking it at the Cathedral? Apropos of the Catalogue, I don't know what has become of my candidate for editing it. In a short time, I will try to stir him up. Have you heard anything from him in the last few months?

My own Brunonian activities have subsided during the summer except for sending off an article to Dr. Sartan on Sir Tom's Scientific Practice and another to Ronald Crane on my old friend effluvium and her sisters. The former will appear in Isis, ages hence, and the latter in Modern Philology (Chicago). A third article on Sir Tom's notion of the Hieroglyphics is still being doctored by an Egyptological friend and will begin to go the rounds starting with the American Scholar (Phi Beta Kappa). It is unannotated and fairly popular. Have you any suggestions about where to send it?

The whole book is only hesitating, not flagging, and one fine day I shall plague you with the text of a complete revision of it.

My very best wishes to the whole family and special greetings to you. Could you possibly come to the hub-bub on the tenth of October? Rob and I would be pleased beyond words. Furthermore, why don't you come again later in the year and give a talk about Osler? Will you visit Chicago for any reason during terms? If so, we simply must have you and will be waiting at the Union Station with a straight jacket.

Yours sincerely,

Frederic K. Chalmers

Dr. W. W. Francis,
The Osler Library,
McGill University,
Montreal, Canada.

17 June, 1956

Dr. Gordon R. Chalmers,
Rockford College,
Rockford, Ill.

Dear Chalmers:

I wish there were some way of getting your "Sir T. B., true scientist" across to Osler in Elysium. How it would delight him. It is a revelation of an unfamiliar aspect of B. I have never been the worshipper I ought to be, but before I read this I thought I knew something of the delightful old fellow.

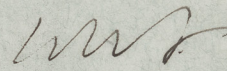
I expect you have already² picked up three misprints: p. 37, line 1, MARCELLO MALPIGHI; p. 43, where lines 10-12 apparently should be transferred to the foot of the (text) page; and p. 58, line 9, "DESCRATES's".

I hope you haven't finished with Browne and that there will be more to come.

I am off to St. Paul to preside at a Medical Library Association meeting next week, but without time, alas, either going or returning, to take a side trip to Rockford.

Kind regards and many thanks.

Yours sincerely,



16 October, 1937

Dr. G. K. Chalmers,
Kenyon College,
Gambier, Ohio

Dear Chalmers:

Congratulations on your new presidency.
I am sorry that Gambier is so far away. I should like
to have been present at your inauguration.

Kenyon has always had an attraction for
me. One of the best of our fraternity songs (Alpha Delta
Phi) begins "When the evening shadows gather Over Kenyon's
silent halls ...", and when Sir Frederic Kenyon, of the
British Museum, was staying at the Osler^s in 1919 for the
Classical Association meeting, he gave us an interesting
account of his visit to the College, which got its name
from his family.

With kind regards to you and Mrs. Chalmers
and every good wish,

Yours sincerely,

L. W. F.