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Chapter XXXV

1915

In civil wars physicians of all men suffer least, as the services of able men are needed by both parties, and time and again it has happened that an even-balanced soul, such as our author, has passed quietly through terrible trials, doing the day's work with closed lips. Corresponding with the most active decades of his life, in which his three important works were issued, one might have expected to find in them reference to the Civil War, or, at least, echoes of the great change wrought by the Commonwealth, but, like Fox, in whose writings the same silence has been noticed, whatever may have been his feelings, he preserved a discreet silence. His own rule of life, no doubt, is expressed in the advice to his son: 'Times look troublesome, but you have an honest and peaceable profession which may employ you, and discretion to guide your words and actions.'

~~Thus,~~ In his address at Guy's Hospital on 'The Religio' ^{given ten years before this time} Osler had

written: ~~ten years before of Sir Thomas Browne~~ ^{on the occasion} There can be no doubt

that he wished to shield Revere so far as he legitimately could - not so

much for the boy's sake ^{as} ~~but~~ for his own. It was an instinctive and un-

controllable reaction of defence. Why should his peace-loving boy have

to fight and kill? "Revere has become devoted to art and literature," he

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writes, "and is following in my footsteps in a love of books." He was not yet ready for the sacrifice. It is all too apparent in his letters to his friends in which he never fails to make the most of what Revere is doing, and what he will have to do 'when he is ready'; and though outwardly cheerful when things were darkest and they were hardest worked, he would say to his wife, "Never mind, the worst is yet to come." Revere's heart was not in the drill. He had failed to get his commission. 'Too immature' the O.T.C. officer had reported. He was now of military age, and the alternative was to enlist in the ranks. This was the boy's own conclusion but he must have been fully conscious of his father's unspoken agony. Many a home in England with an only child, and that a son, must have suffered in this way till the final plunge was made.

Revere has had his 19th birthday and has made up his mind about the first step to take [Lady Osler writes early in the year to her sister]. He simply can't talk with Willie, but talked wisely, oh so wisely, with me. . . . Today he brought home his books from Christ Church and his lovely room must be dismantled. What a strange fate after our fear that he might never get in! So that is done for, and the only hope is that the

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war may some day be over and he can return. Of course dear sister it is useless to say 'don't worry for us' because I know you will feel it all terribly, but with you to look up to and the women I was brought up among I shall do my utmost to hold out and have a cheerful face for the poor dear unselfish angel who is breaking his heart over giving up his boy to this awful risk - that's all.

On January 4th ^{65/66} ~~he~~ writes Mrs. Brewster:

That is a lovely clocklet - thank you so much It adorns my bedside table, tucked in among volumes of Lucian, Gomperz, Jowatt & others from whom I am trying to catch a little Greek fire. Did you ever read Lucians Dialogues? Perhaps I sent you the four little volumes we issued a few years ago from the Press? If not let me know. You would enjoy the last of the Greeks & the first of the Moderns. I wish you could be here to see the wonderful activity in this old land - every one working and so hopeful. Revere is leaving college & going into the ^{University} ~~University and~~ Public

4
3

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School Regiment, at first as a private so as to know the drill and then he will apply for a commission. I hate to have him go & it is a shame to have his training here interrupted, just as he was developing so splendidly. I enclose a proof of his book-plate which he has just chosen - a bit rough, but his own design. Mine is still waiting until I can find some one who can put in a moderate space something distinctive of the four Universities with which I have been connected. I have been talking this afternoon to 600 soldiers on health in camp & field. I enclose you proof of a very much medicated letter to the Jr. of the Amer. Med. Association.

On this same January 4th he writes to the O. C. of the McGill Unit,

which has been fretting all these months in Montreal:

Dear Birkett I am delighted to hear that the McGill Unit has been accepted. By Jove it reads well in your report and should be #A.1. Should you get into a Typhoid district I shall come as a Super-Col. & Campbells Assistant. It is awfully good of you to offer to take Revere as your orderly By the time you get over he will have had a good deal of training & could take messages. He is busy now working at French Have you had any word direct from the war office here? Let me know if it would be worth while speaking to Keogh again They are still doubtful about the coast, tho. it looks better every week There has been great slackness during the past month. We have not been pressed here or at the American Hospital. The boys have had a deuce of a time at the Salisbury Camp - Soaked in rain & knee deep in mud. Finley (?) was here for a

Finley
~~# England has been kept remarkably free from typhoid here -~~
~~# Dr. Malloch had typhoid during his Christmas visit~~
~~(that there was nearly 3000 cases in the Dominion district)~~

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few days & Ellis from Toronto this week end. They have brought cerebro-spinal meningitis of wh. there have been about 30 cases. Greetings to Mrs Birkett & yourself for the New Year. Yours ever,

W^m Osler.

To be Colonel Birkett's orderly: here was a possible way out, one which might satisfy the boy's conscience and give his father a little more time. Two weeks passed. The Public Schools camp had proved unsatisfactory and Revere was just about to enlist in the Inns of Court Corps when came a cable from Montreal with a definite offer which the boy promptly accepted and returned to the O. T. C. at Oxford for further training ^{until the arrival of} ~~and to await~~ the McGill Unit.

"We are all hard at work for the soldiers," Osler writes a Francis niece on January 11th. "Poor chaps, it is awful weather for them. The conditions in the trenches are unspeakable and the Canadians are finding out what England can do in the way of rain. We have not had such a winter for years." With it came the unlooked-for outbreak of cerebro-spinal fever - a new anxiety added to the fear of typhoid, for though the camps in England had been kept remarkably free ^{from enteric} there was much of it in

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France. Dr. Malloch had reported during his Christmas visit that there were about 3,000 cases in the Dunkirk district. The antivaccinationists were still active, and Osler sent to the Editor of The Times another letter on the subject.

Sir: - May I through your columns issue this appeal to our soldiers? In this grave crisis all are anxious to render the greatest possible service to our country. You are leaving your homes and occupations in defense of principles for which your fathers fought and died. It is your bounded duty to keep yourselves in as perfect a state of health as is consistent with the hardships and exposure incidental to every campaign. In war it is not alone the enemy in the field who is to be considered; your worst foes have always been those of your camp - the diseases which have proved more fatal than powder and shot. . . . Among preventable diseases, enteric has been the most terrible foe. More soldiers died of it in South Africa than of wounds. Enteric is a slow, lingering, disabling disease, every death from which is a reproach to the nation. Fortunately sanitary science has made it comparatively rare in this country, but it is not always possible in camps to take all the necessary precautions and we know that at present the disease prevails extensively in parts of north-west France and in Belgium.

Of late years there has been introduced a method of protection by vaccination against it [typhoid], in the efficiency of which those who

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have studied the question have confidence. The inoculation is followed by slight illness, rarely by anything more serious. Among the 22,434 Canadians vaccinated at the Valcartier Camp only twenty-two had symptoms other than the usual malaise and headache (Colonel Hodgetts). Properly inoculated, you possess a reasonable guarantee of protection against one of your most serious foes. I have two questions to ask: -

(1) Will you believe the statement of misguided cranks who are playing into the enemy's hands by purveying their misleading literature, or will you hearken to men who have devoted their lives to the service of humanity, and who have no wish in the matter other than your good?

(2) Against a transient indisposition will you put in the balance the chance of protracting a costly illness, possibly an untimely death?

Oslar would have made almost as good a Director of Propoganda as

did the man to whom he sent a few days later the first of the two following notes:

Dear Lord Northcliffe: These full-page anti-inoculation advertisements are doing a great deal of harm, and the Societies for the Abolition of Vivisection and of Vaccination are carrying out a most energetic campaign. If the Daily Mail could give me a full-page advertisement at a reasonable rate I should be willing to issue a counter-blast. Please pass on my letter to the manager and ask him to let me know.

Meanwhile I have arranged an interview with 'Answer' as suggested by you to Mr. Blackwood. . . .

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On the 14th he writes to J. William White:

Dear J. William I enclose a very nice Review from the Spectator. Strachey was delighted with your book. I hope you have got a publisher here - tho. from what Strachey (whom I asked) said they are rather 'fed up' with war items. Thanks for the Repplier-White paper and pamphlet - A.l. You have just wiped the floor with him. Send me half a doz. copies please for the papers and friends. I have been away for a week - at the Can. Hospital Folkestone and at the Canadian Camp Salisbury Plain investigating an outbreak of cerebrospinal meningitis, - not extensive but very alarming and it may retard their crossing. They have had a devil of a time in the mud - Such weather! floods too all over the country, - Oxford is a lake. Love to Mrs. J. W. Excuse this hurried letter but I want to catch the Lusitania. & I am tired out. Yours ever . . .

"Poor Willie, he never has a chance to breathe he is so busy helping."

Lady Osler writes her sister at the time. "His interest even in wounds and the results of wounds is intense, and I think the new edition of the Practice of Medicine will be a war volume. He is all the time urging men on about the case histories and is conducting a campaign on typhoid inoculation." As she says, everything roused his interest and attention, and no less his pen - the cases of trench feet, the early examples of war neurosis, the brain injuries, the irritable hearts, the early 'shell shock' cases, and so on.* They had

*These things and many more Osler described and discussed in his "Medical Notes on England at War," published from time to time

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in the Journal of the American Medical Association as well as
in two of the Canadian journals.

a visit during the month from Mr. Robert Bacon, an old friend who at this time was endeavouring to get the American Commission for Belgium to put him in the way of helping the French back of the 'lines', and 'who says he shall burst if he doesn't get into khaki.' But it was to be many a month before this wish was to be gratified and meanwhile Mr. Bacon was doing yeoman service as he had done from the very outset; and just now had a new project. He had much to do with the establishment early in August of the American Ambulance at Neuilly, Paris, where an arrangement had been made the first of the year to have one of the hospital services taken over by successive groups of surgeons and nurses from some of the American medical schools - a unit from the Western Reserve under Dr. Crile was there, and was to be followed in three months by one from Harvard, and then in turn from the University of Pennsylvania which was to give J. William White the outlet he sought. Could not something of the sort be done for the British, whose hospitals in France as soon as the spring campaign opened were certain to be overcrowded and undermanned?

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~~It was a~~ ^{this} programme they finally worked out together, as will be seen, and ~~it was a~~
~~it was~~ very ^{timely act} desirable for Anglo-American relations at the moment were
 unduly strained by the recent American 'Notes'. Were copper and petro-
 leum and food from American ports destined for Germany 'conditional
 contraband'? If so, they were liable to seizure and Sir Edward Grey
 pointed out that the copper exports from America to Dutch, Scandana-
 vian and Italian ports had grown prodigiously.

"I opened the Times yesterday," writes Lady Osler on the 21st, "and
 saw in large letters: 'Sir William Osler offers his services to Canada'
 and was soon inundated with messages and notes. It of course means no-
 thing more than his offering to help with organization &c.* All

*Osler promptly wrote the Editor of the Lancet: "Please take
 no notice of that newspaper canard about me. It arose from a
 harmless statement I made to Birkett that when they had their
 hospital organized in France I would go over and help them should
 they have any serious typhoid outbreak."

Revere's papers are filled out and sent in and the cable sent to Ottawa
 about his commission. Willie feels very satisfied about it and Col.
 Jones who has all the Canadian medical affairs in his hands says he pre-
 fers a chap who has a brain and no experience."

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On this same January 21st Osler writes to the Princess Louise, evidently in reply to a query regarding the situation at Salisbury Plain.

Dear Princess: There were four cases [of cerebrospinal fever among the Canadians] at Valcartier, three on the voyage, and there have been about twenty-five in the camp of which I saw eleven at present ill. They have opened a special hospital which is very comfortable, a laboratory for the examination of the contact cases, and they have an excellent staff of doctors and nurses, - one doctor in particular, a young Canadian from the Rockefeller Institute, New York, who fortunately is an expert in matters relating to the serum treatment of the disease. I do not think the epidemic will be severe. I may mention, too, that there have been cases at the Shorncliffe camp near Brighton, which I am going down next week to visit. The conditions on the Plain have been most unfortunate but the disease is one which may break out in the best of barracks and camps.

I have been taking a great deal of interest in the McGill Unit and hope to go over and help them get established somewhere in France. I hear they do not arrive until the end of April. I have a very happy remembrance of your good husband and of all he did for Canada, particularly in the days when he founded the Royal Society of which I was one of the original members, and on the Committee with him. He had a life full of usefulness and we Canadians must always feel very grateful for what you and he were able to do in shaping the early destinies of the Dominion. . . Please do not mention the slight outbreak at Shorncliffe, as it is not yet known. . .

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He had had ^{abundant} ~~previous~~ experience with cerebrospinal fever in the epidemics

which occurred in Maryland in 1893 and again in 1898 - indeed ^{in 1899} ~~the follow-~~
~~ing year~~ he had made it the subject of his Cavendish Lecture in London.

The War Office as well as the profession were greatly disturbed over this outbreak and Osler wrote for the journals* a short but reassuring paper in

*"Cerebrospinal Fever in Camps and Barracks." The British Medical Journal, Jan. 30, 1914.

which he gave the history of the disease as it occurs in encampments; also some sensible hints regarding the best means of preventing contagion which was largely a matter of 'contacts' when men live nine in a tent as they were living on Salisbury Plain. It was an alarming epidemic with high mortality, and though Simon Flexner some years before (1906-7) had elaborated at the Rockefeller Institute a protective serum which had been successfully used by Dr. A. G. Robb of Belfast, it was little known to ~~English~~ physicians ⁱⁿ ~~as~~ ^{which} England had been remarkably free from the disease in pre-war days.

Treatment with the available serum (afterwards found to be worthless) had ~~dismally~~ failed, and the error was not really redressed until ^{its establishment} ~~the~~ Medical

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*initials
End of in. Need further
2 lines - on in
our Bib. Soc. report.*

~~which came to the office~~
Research Council finally, ~~two(?) years later,~~ put Gordon to work on the subject, much time having been lost meanwhile.

Tired out and thoroughly chilled at one of his visits to the camps Osler wound up the month with one of his bad colds which housed him for a week but gave him time for other things. "You are always a good bibliographical tonic," he writes L. L. Mackall. "I am struggling to finish my paper on the Early Printed Medical Books. It's rather a heavy job." And to Jacobs a few days later: "I have not written for a long time. The days and weeks fly by. We are so busy with so many things but fortunately the back of the winter is broken." And he adds: "I forget whether I told you of my election to the Roxburghe Club which is a sort of blue ribbon society of its kind." ^{Also} ~~And~~ to F. H. Garrison: that "our Bibliographical Society were so pleased with their medical President that they elected me for another period! Everything goes on smoothly here. Frost-bites, cold-bites, and cerebrospinal fever

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are the things which have been interesting me chiefly." And to Dr. F. W. Mott of the Royal College of Physicians: "I think the President of the College should be a man resident in London. I have had enough of these things and am not especially ambitious in this direction. To tell you the truth, I think the business would bore me to death. All the same, it is awfully good of some of the Fellows to think of me."

In other letters he expresses himself quite emphatically regarding Anglo-Teutonic relations. "So glad to hear of Sudhoff and Müller," he writes to A. C. Klebs, "but it's a hopeless job to think of getting any truth between the two sides. I wish they would hang a few of the newspaper editors. You seem to have been pretty fortunate in Belgium for we have had very different stories told us by Americans over there, particularly by one of the members of the Commission who called here last Saturday. Everything will depend upon our control of the sea, and if that goes then it will be a question of how long before the Teutonic and American eagles are at one another's throats." And on January 27th he writes

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to W. G. MacCallum:

Dear Mac: Sorry not to have answered your nice letter before but this house is nothing but a branch post-office and I am tied up with all sorts of things besides being on the road a great deal. One can't help feeling very sad about our old German friends, but there will be an awful gulf between this country and Germany for the next two generations. Their hate is nothing to the loathing expressed here on all sides. Of course the atrocities have been grossly exaggerated but Klebs tells me they tell ^{just} the same stories about English troops. Unfortunately there seems to be no question about the Belgian horrors. We have about 21 professors here with their families, 130 people in all and they are living on good American money, partly what we have collected ourselves and partly from the splendid Rockefeller gift. . . The poor Canadians have had a devil of a time at the Salisbury camp - mud to the knees and the weather has been appalling. . .

Then, in reply to some peace resolutions which had been passed by the Federation of American Biologists which had met the end of the year, expressing the hope of an early and enduring peace without permanent cause of rancour, ensuring to each nation the glories of scientific and humanitarian achievement, and so on - to this he sends Professor Graham Lusk an acknowledgment:

Acknowledgment

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Dear Lusk: Many thanks for the copy of the resolution. It is a pious wish, but there is an intellectual gulf wider and deeper than the Atlantic being built between Germany and this country. It is very sad, and it is hard to know just what to do about old friends. I never saw that copy of Müller's letter. I should like very much to read what he said. I suppose in a way it is most fortunate that they can get into such a mental attitude. After all, it would be a terrible tragedy if they did not believe their own country was right. . .

In October of the preceding year Osler and J. G. Adami, who was now ^{at the}
~~in the Canadian~~ ^{Medical} Headquarters ~~Office (?)~~ ^{of the Canadian Expeditionary Force,} in London, had had some correspon-
dence regarding the standardization of the war records relating to casu-
alties which would be essential ^{for any proper} ~~future~~ ^{medical} ~~history~~ ^{of the war} ~~of the war~~ ^{to be written:}
~~the war:~~ and Adami in particular was anxious that ^{early} provision should be made ^{to}
~~for a proper medical war-museum.~~ ^{gather material,} As Osler ^{held to} ~~prophesied~~ ^{there were many difficulties to be} ~~(cf. his letter of~~
~~October 9th)~~ they immediately ran up against the 'red tape' of the Army
~~Medical Corps~~ ^{surmounted but} ~~the R.A.M.C.~~ However, even 'red tape' can be worn
~~through, if not cut, by persistence, and by the end of January Osler was~~
~~able to write to the Editor of the Lancet.~~

this action on his part together with his strong advocacy of both move-

maybe ascribed not only
~~ments) is due~~ the British Medical History of the War (the eighth and last

volume of which, ^{to} ^{able} under the editorship of Major General Sir W. G. MacPherson,

Eight, not last volume
(the eighth volume of this notable work has just been published (1923))
~~son, has just been published), and the splendid collection which consti-~~

tutes the Army Medical Museum, now housed at the Royal College of Surgeons.

Hitherto there had been no proper medical history of any British cam-

paign, not even of the Crimea or of the war in South Africa, ~~there had been~~

with what indeed to be compared
nothing to compare with the medical records of the American Civil War.

Sir Alfred The Director General of the Army Medical Services - in military parlance "the D.G.M.S." -
Keogh and his staff at the War Office were throughout the autumn of 1914

had been
working at intense pressure. The demands for hospitals, ambulances and

new medical units were insistent, ^{and there} There seemed at first little hope that

the War Office would ^{could possibly ever} yield to Osler's strong representation of the case.

General Keogh himself was far from being opposed, but as he expressed it, 'we

^{are} were conducting a critical war not a scientific investigation.'

^{Suggestion}
At Osler's instigation Adami addressed a letter to the Lancet, and

^{it was arranged that the Council of the}
~~happily~~ almost simultaneously with its appearance ~~the~~ National Medical Re-

^{should come}
search Council ~~came~~ forward with the offer to undertake all the necessary

(Johnnie Osler was a member)

collection and record of medical statistics, as well as to make itself responsible for the conduct of researches into war diseases. With this

^{to the D.P.M.S.} assurance) that his overworked staff would ^{in no way} not be made responsible ^{for their investigations} early in the New Year of 1915 Keogh acted upon Osler's suggestions, and appointed ^(the proposal was finally accepted after being finally acted upon.) ^{(H) must write next page}

a ~~Medical History Committee~~. These events explain the following letter ^{from Osler}

^{sent late in January} addressed to the Editor of the Lancet; in February, 1915:

Dear Sprigge: As you know, the War Office has taken Adami's advice and appointed a committee to supervise the medical and surgical history of the war. It would be a great matter to get the notes all systematically arranged in one system. I was at the American Hospital, Paignton, this week, where I found an admirable system of card-catalogue classification of the cases, and it seemed to me it would be an admirable model for some of the other hospitals. I think it would be worth while putting in the Lancet. . . .

So it came about

As a matter of fact, so far as clinical records were concerned, 'red tape' in this case had to be circumvented, but the entering wedge was Adami's idea of providing for a war museum and Osler's ^{long advocacy} realization of the wisdom of assembling of material for a future Medical History of the War.

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~~A Committee to prepare a History of the Royal Army Medical Corps some day did not, for the War Office, mean any immediate new development beyond the appointment of one of the two Secretaries, of that Committee, Captain F. S. Brereton, ^{being} ~~R.A.M.C.~~ ^{put}, in charge of an office for the collection of the medical war diaries of the different units in the field, war maps, and other documents bearing upon medical activities.~~

with Captain Brereton, Colonel Osler →

and also p. 15
^{Col. James Keogh}
In a few months the D.G.M.S. gave his assent to Adami's proposal.

Recall
*Adami writes me that he remembers discussing this matter with Sir William Osler, Sir James Mackenzie, Fletcher and others, but whether the proposal came from himself or from Osler he fails to remember. He points out, further, that Sir William Osler was a member of the Council of the Medical Research Committee, and thus probably played some part in the action taken by that Committee.

that the Hunterian Museum, where Arthur Keith and S. G. Shattuck were at work, should become the store-house for future museum material, rather than the Army Medical School at Millbank where there was no official Curator.

So it came about that a
* Committee of twelve to provide the necessary coördinating authority for the compilation of an adequate medical history of the war was nominated

with Osler's name included, Lord Moulton being made provisional Chairman: *and so far as the War Office was concerned it merely reserved the right to nominate.*

~~What was of more importance was that, with Captain Brereton, Walter Morley~~

with Captain Brewster Dr. [now Sir] Walter Morley

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less to say, accurate records of this sort were needed also for purposes of research, whereby Dr. [now Sir Walter] Fletcher was ~~aided~~ ^{appointed Co-Secretary a matter of chief} importance in view of his influential and independent position on board of an ~~equally~~ ^{equally} important role as head of an active Medical Research Committee;* and this

at the instigation of Dr. Christopher Addison who became first Minister of Health (1914),

*As a part of Lloyd George's National Insurance Act provision had been made, whereby a generous sum was to be devoted each year to the furtherance of researches in connection with the public health, and Dr. Fletcher, shortly before the outbreak of war, had been called from the physiological laboratory in Cambridge, to supervise the disposition of this fund. The Research Committee, acting independently of the War Office ^{during} since the early ^{months} of the war, had already been subsidising researches of great military importance, ~~conducted~~ ^{conducted} at the National Institute for Medical Research, ~~re-established~~ ^{re-established} in the

in connection with the Insurance Act now administered a Treasury grant under a Committee of the Privy Council.

at Mount Vernon Hospital at Hamstead. ~~During~~ ^{during} the war the building was utilized as a ~~Head~~ ^{Headquarters} ~~of the~~ ^{of the} after all was the main object of the whole conspiracy. ~~It was none too~~

(9) ~~inserted~~ ^{inserted} ~~into~~ ^{into} page 146

~~soon~~ ^{for} not many weeks elapsed before 'chemical' warfare was first intro-

duced by the enemy ~~and~~ ^{to} find some prompt means of defence against chlo-

rine gas the despised scientists were called upon in a panic and from this

time on there was no question as to the place of research in the future

conduct of the war. So the powers given over to the Medical Research

Committee in the R.A.M.C. came into being with ~~no~~ ^{not much} further talk of ~~Medical~~ ^{Medical}

History till the war was over; and ^{available} the Committee played no small part in

the highly creditable record ^{made by this Corps in the Polish campaign} of the Medical Corps, ~~for all of which Sir~~

Alfred Keogh ~~properly~~ ^{fully} deserves ~~the~~ ^{the} credit.

Medical scientists by in army corps when duties of the too treatment of the sick & to the example Prof. C.S. Sherrington's other colleagues he has a day in a shell for been working in the most useful place even during a war. of the future President of the Royal Society.

55 See if this is actual letter.

To Bress strong advocacy of this movement ^{therefore} maybe recorded in large measure the admirable Polish Medical History of the War, the eighth and last volume of series, under the able editorship of Major General Sir W.G. Macpherson, has just been published (1923); and no less so Dr. Adams' ^{of the} splendid collection which constitutes the Army Medical Museum ^{based} at the Royal College of Surgeons due to his influence. Bill of greater importance than this

in the early days of the war were supposed to be the only ones to be wounded. of the future President of the Royal Society.

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(now Sir Walter) Fletcher ^{a matter of great importance since} was appointed co-Secretary. Per Fletcher, as

*As a part of Lloyd George's National Insurance Act, provision had been made whereby a generous sum was to be devoted each year to the furtherance of researches in connection with the Public Health, and Dr. Fletcher shortly before the outbreak of the war had been called from the Physiological Laboratory in Cambridge to supervise the disposition of this fund. The Medical Research Committee from the early days of the war had independently been subsidising researches of great military importance.

active head of the Medical Research Committee, ^{held a most important and independent position.} was able to do very much.

It was soon made evident ^{by Mrs.} even to the long-suffering D. G. that a history could not be written without uniform and durable field cards which could be attached to the sick and wounded as they were evacuated from one hospital to another on their way to the Base or to 'Blighty'; cards which could be assembled and studied as the war progressed by people not overwhelmed by administrative details as were those in the War Office. Needless to say, accurate records of this sort were needed also for statistical and research purposes, and if the Medical Research Committee were to undertake the collection of statistics these records were absolutely essential. The War Office ^{had} accepted the offer of the Medical Research Committee none too soon. Not

(back to 1914 1915)

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Maecurid. Uniq. of quite a different sort were found on at Oxford and from there

To return to 13 Nerham Gardens whence Lady Osler writes her sister

on February 13th:

Today I have just been wild with despair about it all the the heart-strings are nearly pulled out with sympathy. . . . A Prof. Thonan, geologist from Louvain who has been living at Merton College some time has now been given a house and brought his wife and baby. Yesterday she came to say that the landlady had left no linen for change, etc., so I went to see her and have made her quite happy today. I took her out to buy pots and pans. Fancy her experience - her first baby born one day - Louvain bombarded the next - she and baby moved into the cellar - and from one part of the cellar to another as the house fell in. Finally they were in a vegetable bin for three days, then the water-pipes leaked in and they crept out and took refuge in a church - and finally got away. Not a vestige of house left nor a rag of clothing. Her people lived at Ypres; they reached there but were driven out - and all came to England. Now the parents' house is ruined, and they are just heart-broken and worn out. . . .

And in a postscript she adds:

Monday. ~~Feb. 11th~~. I have just come from town where I have been on a queer errand - an old friend of Willie's died suddenly* - he was

*This was J. Wesley Mills, Osler's one-time assistant in the physiological course at McGill, who had died with scant warning in an attack of angina, as W.O. explains in a letter the next day to Francis J. Shepherd of Montreal.

going to the coroner's inquest and to arrange for the cremation, etc. - was called to Sheffield and asked me to go. I have always such queer

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errands in London - ovarian tumours - cremations - Belgian babies - almost anything. I am worried nearly ill over America and Germany.

There was reason for worry. ^{Sunder}Germany and ^{Washington}America had been arguing the 'conditional contraband' and 'continuous voyage' questions, with increasing heat on the American side and firmness on the British, even though the questions involved a considerable rewriting of international law. Germany had nationalized all food supplies, and Britain answered by making food-stuffs contraband. To this Germany countered on February 18th by announcing a blockade, and by the end of the month came the declaration by Britain of a counter-blockade against Germany, imperfect though it must be. Meanwhile the military operations of the winter following the First Ypres had amounted to a stalemate. Apparently neither side could win in that way and the war was resolving itself into one of 'attrition.' Colonel House was in Europe to put out feelers for peace, and the British were preparing for the disastrous attack on the Dardanelles.

On February 23rd Lady Osler writes her sister:

Lieutenant R. Osler leaves for Canadian Military Hospital at Cliveden tomorrow. It is hard to realize what it means. Sometimes I have felt

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he should have been encouraged to fight but he is better fitted for another kind of usefulness. Independent of that I do not feel that Willie who has given his life for others should be subjected to the risk of giving up this boy in the other way. Their companionship is wonderful and the vacancy in the daily life of rushing in and out will be hard, but I must not dwell on it. . .

Theirs was indeed an unusual companionship for father and son. 'A chip of the old block' in more ways than one - even in the matter of harmless practical jokes. One of them, recounted by Sir Walter Fletcher who was also victimized, took place on the Sunday before Revere's departure, and the chief victim was so delighted that records of the occurrence are found preserved - inserted in his library copy of Gustave Brunet's Essai sur les Bibliothèques

Imprimeurs imaginaires et bibliographes supposés. Etude bibliographique. Paris, 1867. ² ~~1~~ Among ^{Europe}

the documents is the following letter in fine crabbed script ^{addressed} to Mr. Revere

Osler from J. R. Thornley, Bookseller and Dealer in Antiques, 19 Castle Hill, Tombland, Norwich:

Dear Sir: I take the liberty of sending you a small but select list of books which have lately come into my possession. You may remember perhaps an old gentleman who lodged in a room above my shop: I think that he once gave you a book from his collection - or was it your friend,

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the whole have been subjected to light but he is better fitted for an-
other kind of assistance. Independent of that I do not feel that Willie
who has given his life for others should be subjected to the risk of giv-
ing up this boy in the other way. Their companionship is wonderful and
the vacancy in the daily life of training in and out will be seen, but I
must not dwell on it.

There was indeed an unusual companionship for father and son. A ship of
the old block in part was seen - even in the water of business prac-
tical jokes. One of them, recorded by Sir Walter Rieu, who was also
victimized, took place on the Sunday before Henry's departure, and the

Also inserted in a long list of ~~books~~ ~~for~~ ~~an~~ ~~in~~ ~~of~~ ~~in~~ ~~any~~ ~~library~~ book titles on
labeled on the back of artificial books in the library of Lord Astor was an
accompanying note in Helen's script which says they were prepared by H. Drury
of B. Quaritch and given me by him. The following are examples:

- "Shells and Mollusca" by Sloyd George: "Adventures of Captain Kettle" by J. Post:
- "Did he mean it?" by B. Shaw: "The Light-blue Sailed" by Terlsbach: "Why Noah
lived Pear" by Sope. "In Oldat Forte" by Oderegins: etc etc.

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Samuel Leake? About a week ago he called me into his room and told me he was dying, which was indeed evident from his appearance, and that he would like to sell me a few of his books 'dirt cheap', as he said, that I might sell them with a good profit in remembrance of any kindness he had received from me. The remainder of the library was privately sold on Thursday last to Maggs of London, bringing about £2,000. The old man himself died yesterday quietly in his chair, holding a bible in one hand and his much loved Aldine Horace in the other, both of which books he has left to me.

The list of books by his instructions, is to be sent only to certain people whom he thinks will appreciate any of them they may buy. Both you, Sam Leake and James Thorrow are among the number. Hoping you will find something to your taste among these, I remain yours respectfully,

J. R. Thornley, Norwich.

Accompanying the letter was an amazing 'list of books belonging to the late Elias Brumley of Norwich.' Needless to say it was a hoax. Revere had first tried it out with success on his friend Bobby Emmons; and then the two with even greater success on Lady Osler; and finally when his father and Fletcher came in he told them the whole story of the old man he used occasionally to see while tutoring in Norwich the year before, who lived

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above the shop where he used to purchase fishing tackle. A bas the Medical Research Committee, we'll go up there tomorrow with the boys, was the prompt reaction of his hearers, and finally Revere read the list of books and came to:

"AVICENNA. A manuscript, small folio. I know nothing of this, as Dr. Watley the only Persian scholar in Norwich is away and I have no means of getting information. However, since I only paid 10/- for it I am willing to let you have it for £1.0.0."

At this W. O. looked at Revere very hard, took the paper from him, put on his glasses - and, in a moment - "You little scoundrel, you've fooled your *Dad*" ~~father.~~"

To H. B. Jacobs from W. O.

Oxford, March ~~13~~, 1915.

Dear Jacobs: You will be amused at this joke by Revere on the old man. The Sunday before he left he got his friend Bobby Emmons and Grace very much excited with a letter of which I here send you a copy. I had dining with me that night a well-known bibliophile Dr. Fletcher of Trinity College, Cambridge, and when we came back from dinner Revere read the letter and the list of books, and we were getting our telegrams ready and Bobby Emmons and Revere were arranging to go off to Norwich in the morning, when I began to smell a rat about the Avicenna. The joke really went off very well, and you will be greatly interested in the list, as it shows how

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much Revere has picked up in the way of bibliography - how and where Heaven only knows. The names of ^{the} ~~those~~ men referred to are a couple of old booksellers at Norwich, whom he knew. . . .

Osler made the most of all these incidents - anything to get his mind off the war during his hours at home. And though the house almost always contained some young war-worn Canadian eager to tell of hair-raising

experiences and horrors, to none of this would he listen. *So it was not purely accidental that, as* ~~is~~ though no-

thing unusual was going on, he ~~sent~~ ^{Should send} out early in March to many a surgical clinic in America a gift accompanied by a note of explanation such as

the following:

March 4, 1915

Dear W. J. Mayo: Your clinic will never be truly prosperous until under the patronage of St. Cosmos and St. Damian, the saints of surgery, of whom I am sending you a coloured lithograph! Several years ago at Rome, in the Mother Church for the West I was delighted to find wrapped in a parcel among the precious relics the very instruments with which in the third century A.D. these famous surgeons had performed the transplantation of the thigh operation - and successfully, too - antedating Carrel about 1700 years! It is a cheap print, as you see, but the merit of it is that it comes direct from the shrine of the saints. I was glad to see Crumley over here at the American Hospital. He seems a very nice fellow. With best wishes to you, and special greetings to your brother, . . .

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At home meanwhile, Osler continued 'preaching, writing, inspecting, hoping.' He saw life steadily and saw it whole. Though there were many engagements relating to medico-military affairs, the meetings of the Bibliographical Society were kept going, for people in their leisure moments must not let themselves dwell upon the war. The Historical Section of the R. M. S. of which Norman Moore was now President, also kept on with its sessions, with Osler as usual behind the scenes. The exhibition of books on the history of military hygiene had been held early in the year, and at the February meeting Sir Alexander Simpson of Edinburgh, though an octogenarian, was prevailed upon to come and read his paper on Jean Astruc - a paper he had long hesitated to publish 'fearing that free-thinkers might make an ill use of it for lessening the authority of the Pentateuch.' And in his discussion Osler took up the cudgels in defense of Astruc. Again at the the March meeting A. R. Cushney read upon William Withering[#] 'who had discovered the secret of the use of digitalis,' and Osler must have been behind this, too, for a few

*from a descendant of Withering, in November 1914, the valuable
Osler had secured the Withering papers & MSS in this library
from a descendant in November 1914*

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months before he had sent Professor Cushney a rare treatise of Withering's he had picked up at a sale.

He had arranged, too, for a special meeting at one of the sections of the Royal Society of Medicine, to discuss the epidemiology of cerebrospinal meningitis - a meeting held on February 26th when he opened the discussion by saying he hoped it would 'allay the growing apprehension in the minds of the public, and help to stimulate among the profession an interest in one of the most remarkable of epidemic diseases'; and he went on to speak of the sources of infection and of the serum therapy in regard to which many letters had been passing between Simon Flexner and himself. It was an important ball to set rolling, and an active discussion on the subject lasted over two following meetings of the section.* Meanwhile he himself was on the road, as is indicated in a letter to Sir Dawson Williams: "I will see your man at Salisbury on Thursday and do anything I can to help him. I hear the cases have been very numerous in the civil population. In London, too, it is spreading.

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Do come down and spent a quiet week-end before long."

His clinics at the Radcliffe Infirmary also continued. One of them
on the subject which had long interested him, "Arteriovenous Aneurysm"

~~from Gunshot Wounds,~~ ^{was} given on March 26th for the benefit of the local
medical officers, ^{and it} got into print.* *His Papers* →

[*Lancet, May 8, 1915, i, 949-55.

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His letters of the period were much like his life - a few hopeful words about the progress of the war - mention of his boy - and then he abruptly switches off to his library and the book-mart. On March 7th he writes Mrs. Brewster:

All goes well here, and things begin to look brighter. The German blockade seems a farce, and we hope for a peaceful solution of the neutral shipping question. There has been a lull in the stream of wounded, and preparations are in progress for a great advance in the spring - 100,000 beds in France! It is appalling to think of it, but such is war! Revere went off about 10 days ago. He has a commission in the Canadian contingent and has been assigned for duty at one of the Canadian Hospitals as orderly officer. He is to join the McGill Unit when it comes over in April or May and will be Col. Birkett's orderly officer. They will have charge of one of the new Hospitals in France. He will do ambulance & supply work. I have four nephews at the front and five other relatives come over in the 3rd Canadian Contingent, so that we shall have our anxieties - I enclose you a printed slip of a memorial service which we held at our College this afternoon in memory of the Oxford men who have fallen. A congregation of 1500 sang Abelard's hymn "Oh what the joy". Eighteen of our undergraduates ~~have already fallen~~, several of them we knew quite well. It is a shocking business, and it does seem a mockery to hold services but I suppose it is a comfort to the poor relations I

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could not help thinking of the nice German women singing this afternoon
Ein fester Burg ist unser Gott as I used to hear them in the Cathedral in
Berlin. Thank Uncle Ned for his nice articles in Life. . . .

The Canadian Hospital at Taplow where Revere had gone - one of the
best equipped and most successful of the privately endowed war hospitals -
was erected on the grounds of the Astors' beautiful place at Cliveden

on the Thames. ^{J.H. of Calgary, Alberta.} ~~The Commanding Officer, Colonel Mewburn, was an old~~ ?
~~friend, and Osler's official visit as Consultant was made there every~~

Monday morning during the remainder of the war, and ^{from the Officer Commanding,} ~~officers and men~~

~~from the O. G. down~~ ^{Col. J.H. Mewburn of Calgary, Alberta, an old friend, down through the list of junior officers, sisters, and} ~~look back upon these inspections, and the cheer they~~ ^{men}
~~all seem to love~~

invariably brought, as one of the bright incidents of their long-drawn
out period of service at this hospital. The War Office, to judge from
the number of beds it was ^{as early} ~~providing~~ in England and France, was making
provision for an immense number of ^{possible,} casualties in connection with the
expected spring offensive; ~~as indicated in his last letter;~~ and many units
which had been organized to run hospitals of 520 beds found to their dis-
may that a unit of 1040 beds had been accepted as a standard. ~~This~~

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Apparently Osler and Robert Bacon had already made ^{overtures} ~~an approach~~ regarding some help from the American universities, to judge from the following note of March 11th from Sir Alfred Keogh ~~the D.G.~~:

My dear Osler: I wrote you last night about the Americans. I wish, however, that MacAlister had been more explicit about them. At present we had better not do anything. I hope the McGill Unit will not delay. Everything points to our wanting them as soon as possible. They might have to wait here, but their presence in England would make us feel safer. . . .

It was two months longer before the McGill Unit finally reached England, and Revere, meanwhile, was put to work in the Quartermaster's department at Taplow and had ^{numer} such chores assigned to him as marching the men to church, all of which he accepted cheerfully, even though in his heart he knew that something more serious than this comfortable billet must come if he were really to 'do his bit.'

On March 15th Osler writes to George Dock in St. Louis:

. . . We are having a busy time here medically. I have been greatly interested in this cerebrospinal outbreak in various parts of the country. I was at Salisbury last week for a couple of days. The disease has

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spread there from the camp to the civil population. I saw some 15 cases, and lectured to nearly 250 doctors from the country. Naturally the public is very much stirred up about it. I am struggling, too, with this typhoid inoculation question, against which the antivaccination cranks are making a strong fight. About 95% of the men are protected. It is curious that the paratyphoid is prevailing so extensively. We only had about twelve cases here at the Base Hospital, seven of which were paratyphoid, and I hear that among the Indian troops in France it is almost entirely paratyphoid. I lectured at Chester, too, last week to the North Wales Medical Society on the soldier's heart. There are a great many instances of the old-fashioned irritable heart of DaCosta - of worry, tobacco, and too much exercise.

The library continues to grow. I have made several great hauls lately - the Withering papers (letters and journals, etc), an MS. Peregrination of Andrew Boorde, a unique copy, from which Hearne printed in 1733 - Aristotle ed. Prin. Aldine. Revere has joined the Canadian Contingent. *W.* He has taken hard to books and to literature. *W.* How are the boys? Lady Osler is well. We have got twenty-two Belgian professors here and their families, all living on good American money. Things are beginning to look hopeful, but it is a long and worrying business. . .

in a letter of
Level as *March 15th to Mrs Jacobs re. - (must be a next to go.)*

~~"A long long way to Tipperary."~~ For four interminable months little

change had occurred in the allied front in Flanders and Northern France, and how

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and how the troops of Kitchener's First Army had endured life in the
constantly shelled ^{and waterlogged and accursed} trenches during that awful first winter passes under-
standing. *'The winter evenings in Flanders are long, how long, O Lord!'* *then were* → ~~to be~~

Just p. 31
And In a letter of March 28th to H. B. Jacobs from the Grand Hotel,
Torquay, he says:

I am here for a few days inspecting the American Hospital at Paignton which has been a great success. There are three nice Hopkins men on the staff. We are all feeling very hopeful. The blockade is a farce - 2 vessels caught last week out of 1500 that reached port. The new army has turned out much better than anyone would have supposed possible. The tussle will be during the next four months. Germany is immensely strong & war is her business so I fear we are in for a long siege.

u?
Did I tell you that I have got the minutes of the Medical Society that Jenner & Parry founded - chiefly in Jenner's hand? I must send it to you to show at the Historical Club. . . I got the Mesne 1471 last week, the 3rd or 4th medical book printed & the first printed by a native Italian. This about expends my E.B.O. fund which has enabled me to get some treasures. . .

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These were the days when 'Gott strafe England' was being sung in Germany, and 'Tipperary' in England, where as yet was no hate. "If you have the chance," writes Osler to L.L. Mackall who is preparing to return to Germany to resume some studies there, "give my hearty greetings to the Ewalds in Berlin and to the Müllers in Munich. If they do not treat you well in Jena we will give you a separate alcove in the Bodleian." These were days too, when as the following letter indicates, the provisions of the Geneva Convention were at least by one party being observed:

To President Lowell of ~~Harvard~~ from W. O. Oxford, April 3, 1915.

Dear Lowell: You doubtless know that several Universities have sent members of their surgical staff to the French hospitals. Do you think Harvard University would offer to staff a British war hospital for 1040 beds: for work either in France or in England. This means a personnel which I enclose on the paper "A." We do not ask them to bring equipment,

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though doubtless surgeons would prefer to bring their own surgical instruments. We will pay them their salaries if they wish this. The rates which we pay are enclosed on "B". We cannot give the personnel commissions, though I am not quite so certain of that, ~~though~~ ^{but} I do not suppose they care. The status is the same whether they have commissions or not. I cannot for the moment say whether they would work in England or in France. So much depends upon future military events. . . . If the offer be made, we shall have to get the consent of the enemy. (See Article XI of the Geneva Convention.)'

This quotation is from a private letter of the Director General, and should of course, not be printed, but I thought it best to give the statement in his own words as you see by it exactly what is wanted. I know how difficult the position is in America, and particularly for public bodies such as universities, and the Faculty might feel that it was not quite a friendly act on the part of a neutral. On the other hand, the medical work is strictly humanitarian. If the suggestion meets with your approval, talk the matter over privately please with one or two of your chief surgeons, for whom, of course, it would be a great opportunity. . . .

The enormous group of Base Hospitals in the Etaples-Camiers district on the coast south of Boulogne were at this time just in process of erection, the larger number of them in permanent huts, and it was in the most easterly and poorly placed hospital of this group that the McGill Unit - as well as

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ones from Harvard (permanently), Columbia and Rush (temporarily) - were finally stationed. Meanwhile Osler writes on April 8th to Colonel Birkett:

Dear Birkett: Keogh told me yesterday that he could not say at present where you will go first. The truth is they are a good deal tied up, in the first place waiting for Kitchener's Army, and then there have been great delays in getting material and the proper preparations for a series of big Base Hospitals in France. So that his advice was not to hurry, as you might only be tied up here, kicking your heels doing nothing. The present position is very awkward. There are thousands of vacant beds at Boulogne, the hospitals here are not half full so that the men have not work enough to do, and yet there must be constant preparation for an enormous increase within the next few months. The men will simply have to exercise patience, as the delays are unavoidable. . . .

And on the same day he writes to Mrs. Brewster:

All goes well with us - very busy fortunately as there are not days for thinking - we spent a week at Torquay as I had to see the American Hospital, which is close by at Paignton. It is very well organized, and doing splendid work. . . . Everything looks hopeful - the new army is in fine form & should be ready to move in a couple of months. Revere is very happy at Cliveden & getting plenty of work. The McGill Unit with which he will go to France does not come over for a month or six weeks. My nephew Dr. Francis & his great friend Dr. Campbell Howard are with them I wish you

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could see him in his uniform - he has grown & developed so much; but it such a pity to have his education blocked just as he was getting so interested. But that is a small matter. Grace is at her shop - hard at it all day. She has about forty university ladies at work. I think her New England energy is a revelation to them. What a time you must be having with the German propaganda. Uncle Ned's articles in Life are A.1. I have been reading Osborn Taylor's new book with great pleasure. . . Mrs. Chapin comes this week by the Lusitania so we are a bit anxious as the submarines are about, tho. so far this week there have been no mishaps.

In spite of Osler's expressed optimism to his friends abroad, England was as yet by no means aroused, and though women were beginning to boycott the shops in which young men still stood behind the counters, the lower classes looked with lack-lustre eye on the recruiting posters and one saw but a smattering of khaki on the streets of Liverpool and London. Germany had to make a few even worse blunders than she had already made, before the war stirred the English people as a whole. Still, by now a British army had been assembled in France calculated to be 'fifty-five times greater than the force that charged with King Henry at Agincourt.' The battle of Neuve Chapelle had already been fought early in March, a battle in which the

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newly invented artillery 'barrage' was employed and in which the Canadians first distinguished themselves. But it was a desperate affair which availed little except for an important lesson - that for this sort of thing the army was ⁱⁿsufficiently supplied with artillery ammunition. A lull followed while the British were concentrating on the Dardanelles expedition, and on April 5th Osler wrote F. H. Garrison:

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Things here are going well. If we could only shut up the newspapers for six months and close the Ananias and Saphias Clubs, things would be much more satisfactory. There is no question that the British 'Tommy' is able to give a pretty good account of himself, and we hope to have a couple of million in the field before July 1st. Would it be possible to let me have a list of your incunabula, up to and including 1480? In the list I am preparing I would like to put S.G.L. after a good many. . .

Then in April and May came the Second Ypres with the Germans attacking, and poison gas used - a chaotic soldiers' battle during which for days the fate of the British army hung in the balance; an episode which showed the superiority of the British Tommy as a soldier, but the inferiority of the war machine behind him which largely served to fill Flanders with a grow-

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ing crop of wooden crosses.

In a letter of May 5th to his old friend 'Ned' Milburn, commiserating with him on an illness, Osler says:

We are very busy. I am connected with three or four hospitals and have to be away a great deal, but the work is most interesting. The Canadians have covered themselves with glory, and everybody is talking about their bravery. We are getting back a lot of wounded, among them my sister's son, Campbell Gwyn, who has a bullet in his arm. . . . We are expecting the McGill people over at any time. I think they will take charge of a large hospital somewhere in France.

Then came on May 7th the news of the sinking of the "Lusitania", and this with the enemy's ^{employment of chemical warfare} ~~use of gas~~ worked an extraordinary transformation not only on the good-humoured and tolerant British soldier in Flanders but it stirred the country to its depths as nothing else could have done. A reconstruction of the Government soon followed - a Coalition Cabinet with a Ministry of Munitions under Mr. Lloyd George; ~~and~~ Sir Edward Grey and Lord Kitchener alone remaining at their original posts. England had rolled up her sleeves at last.

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During these past busy months Osler had begun to make notes ~~in the blank~~
~~pages of~~ his account-book ~~in the blanks~~ where in other times appointments for
 professional consultations would have been entered. Thus, opposite
 April 29th to May 8th he records:

One of the busiest ten days I ever had. Harrogate on the 29th, interesting case of chronic jaundice. Leeds, Friday, saw Teale and the hospital; back in the evening. On Sat. General Jones of the Canadian Contingent spent the day here and went over the local hospitals. Adami was with us. Sunday, Cheltenham to see a case of hematuria. In eve went to London so as to be able to leave early Monday for Woking to see young Wilkes with septic pneumonia following a fracture. While there a telegram to see Mrs. Burns in London. Saw her in p.m. where up again Tues. a.m. // and In p.m. went to Cliveden to see medical cases at Canadian hospital. Wed. London again. Thurs. London. Friday London, and in p.m. Chatham where lectured to 1500 soldiers. Dinner in eve by medical officers of the garrison. Sat. a.m. saw the Fort Pitt Hospital; made rounds with the young doctors. P.m. went to Bromley to inspect new Canadian convalescent hospitals. I travelled in all 1260 miles which reminded me of old American days. W.O.

~~Mon. May 10. Cliveden.~~

~~Tues. 11. Gosport.~~

~~Wed. 12. Folkestone.~~

~~Thu. 13. London.~~

Success
~~to~~ the next week Mon. May 10 Cliveden. ^{May 11} Tues. Gosport, ^{May 12} Wed. Folkestone Thu. May 13 London. And

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And from the Athenaeum Club on this last morning he sends the following note to a newly elected member of the Royal College of Physicians:

Dear Adami Sorry I cannot stay to see you admitted [College of Physicians] this afternoon but I have been 'on the road' since Monday and must get back by the 1.45. Welcome to the Society of Linacre and Caius.
Yours ever, W^m OSLER.

Among his letters of the next ^{Saturday} ~~Sunday~~ evening is one to Mrs. Brewster

which says:

Things are getting pretty hot but we are trying to keep our heads cool; ^{though} ~~but~~ the war is playing old Harry with our hearts. Every week now the losses are hitting us in the young Oxford men whom we know. One of our special boys has gone - young Howard; and a number of my Canadian friends have been killed Grace is off at Torquay - bringing back a nephew, my sisters son - one of those at the front - wounded in the left arm, but doing well. Revere is waiting for the McGill Unit & meanwhile is very busy having been sent off from Cliveden with 40 men to organize one of the new Hospitals Fortunately he has a quartermaster sergeant who knows the job - I enclose a photo which Sue Chapin took of the Col. & the Lt. I always have to wear uniform when visiting the Hospitals. I am away most of the time, but hope soon to be less busy. This Lusitania horror has shocked the nation beyond belief. Sue Chapin was to have returned on her. Several of my friends were lost - among them that remarkable man Dr. Pearson. . .

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And it is pleasant to think he can end ^(his same) the evening with the growing Biblio-
theca, for he writes the son of his old friend of the Biological Club:

Dear Leidy I picked up both the "Flora & Fauna" and the Rhizo-
pods, and now I want an original letter of the author to put in each
one. So please like a good fellow filch a couple from your collection.
And if you have any duplicate copies of his papers, send them along.
Sincerely yours, &c.

Meanwhile the work-rooms at Oxford and elsewhere had been working
over-time to make respirators, the first clumsy affairs to act as a pro-
tection against chlorine gas, and Osler to judge from his account in
the "Medical Notes from the War" must have been unnecessarily harrowed
this week-end by tales of sojourners bringing first-hand accounts of the
victims of 'gassing.' Even so, some pity goes out to his adversaries,
at least to those not of the 'Gott strafe England' class. So on May 17th
he writes to Professor Wenckebach in Vienna a letter which apparently
reaches him uncensored.

We have often spoken of you, wondering how you were getting along in
your new place under these dreadful conditions. It is a great tragedy

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all round, and one of the worst features for us is the gulf it will dig between the English and the German profession. Everyone here, of course is very busy. I have not seen McKenzie for some time; I see Keith frequently. Wounded are everywhere. We have about 1500 beds here. Fortunately, there has been little or no typhoid, and in fact no serious epidemic outbreak. My boy has joined the Canadian Contingent. . . . How interesting it must be for you to be a follower of your great countrymen van Swieten and de Haen! I have had some splendid additions to my Boerhaave collection lately. I think I showed you that nice set of unedited letters. . . .

No wonder people all brought their troubles to Osler - Colonials, British and stray Americans. He had become, as someone said, the 'Consoler General' of the British Army. In wartime and under military discipline people easily get their feelings hurt, and the War Office has no official consolation department. There were men with the R.A.M.C. across the Channel, like Sir Anthony Bowlby, who played a similar rôle as optimist and smoother of troubled waters, but it is a rare type - much more rare and much more needed at home than at the front where ^{during a war} the spirit on the whole is always better.

May
1915

May 28th was an anniversary, and he noted in his account-book:

Completed today ten years in Oxford. Extraordinarily happy years. Everyone as kind and considerate as could be wished. Grace has been happy and the boy has thriven. Yesterday he went off to join the Canadian Unit from Montreal, with Colonel Birkett. It is a curious thing that with so much more leisure the literary output has been much less than in the previous decade. . . . I have got a good deal of education; I have made a great collection of books for my old school at McGill. I have not done much in the profession here, but I have done 3 useful things, or better, helped to. (1) The Assoc. of Brit. Phy. (2) The Quarterly Journal of Medicine. (3) The Historical Section of the Roy. Soc. Med. The profession has treated me very well; locally I have been most fortunate in my relations, and from the profession at large I have had the kindest treatment. Altogether it has been a most successful experiment. I have kept very well. I have not had many ~~such~~ substernal threatenings ^{such as} ~~that~~ I used to have in Baltimore. I had one attack of renal colic - the second in 12 years. It has been a great comfort not to have had a life of such strain. The one thing I miss is the active teaching and the close association with students and a large group of young doctors, but I console myself with the 31 years of strenuous work I had in Canada and in the United States.

May
1915*Three day Calais*~~On May 31st~~ he writes to J. William White who at last has an ac-

tive job and with James Hutchinson is bringing in their turn a university unit to serve at the Ambulance Américaine in Paris:

Dear J. William Do come direct to us at Oxford. You will probably get in on Sunday the 20th, and there is a very good train that gets here late in the afternoon. Bring a couple of fellows with you. Keogh is willing now to accept a full unit from any one of the American universities or from a combination of them, and one has been arranged between Harvard, Columbia and Johns Hopkins. 'Bob' Bacon made the final arrangements last week before he left. As at the Paris hospital, the chiefs are to stay for a short time, the subordinates for a longer period. The McGill Unit has just come over - 358 strong - and Revere has joined them at Shorncliffe. . . .

In a letter to
~~on~~ June 8th ~~he writes~~ to George Dock^{*largely*} about a Beaumont celebration

that had been held in St. Louis, ^{*Re*} ~~and~~ adds:

Things go on here much the same as usual. If it were not for the men in khaki and the daily death roll, one would scarcely realize that war was in progress. We are very busy; all sorts of things on hand, and there is an extraordinary amount of interest at the hospitals. Revere went off yesterday with the McGill Unit, which is going somewhere south of Calais. He has been for three months at the big hospital at Cliveden, and has got a good deal of useful information about the commissariat^{*S*} and business side of things.

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He was away at a camp in Chester missing thereby the first few days of Revere's short 'leave' allowed before sailing, and on his return found as usual many others at the 'Open Arms'. ^{or Lady Osler writes to his sister,} ^{at this particular time, there were} "Red Cross workers - Mrs.

Walter Page - Mrs. Robert Bliss from the Paris legation - also two men from there, Paul and Dodge, as well as Archie Malloch," ~~as Lady Osler writes her sister,~~ - and among them too was another, an old assistant, a changed, nay broken man, who had given his all with his Canadian battery, first at Neuve Chapelle and then during the subsequent long-drawn out month of the Second Ypres which had culminated on April 22nd. From now on and till his death two years later, he was to be a medical officer with the McGill Unit, but others can best judge whether as soldier, physician or poet he ranks highest. Like as not, in his pocket were the lines of his immortal sonnet* which tells better than any volume how felt the men

*"In Flanders Fields" was first published anonymously in an obscure corner of the December 8th number of Punch. Cf. Sir Andrew Macphail's "Essay on Character." G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1919.

in Flanders during those tragic days of April-May, 1915.

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Sunday afternoon Jack McCrae came [Lady Osler writes her sister] - I am glad and sorry you did not hear him. He looked thin and worn, but was intensely interesting - 31 days in the trenches with 8 days' rest. After Ypres they have been at La Bassée - fighting hard - he came from there last Thursday. His clothes were awful - I have sent everything to the cleaners. He says the British hatred for the Germans increases daily since the Lusitania - and that he wouldn't touch the hand of any of the men he knew so well in London two years ago. He feels that the Allies will win but nothing can be ended except by absolute exhaustion. The nerve strain he says is beyond any sensation possible to describe. When they had to stand on the roadside waiting for orders and saw the French Colonials and civilians rushing away from the gas when it was first turned on, he says it was Hades absolutely; and they stood fast, expecting the Germans on top. After that orders came to push ahead and attack - and they were at it day and night - saving the situation as we know. Really I felt sick when he left Monday night. Monday a.m. Willie and Revere left for Cliveden and I felt really that I was deserted. Revere said good-bye cheerily to all the servants, filled his pockets with books, hugged his Muz and fled. Whenever will he be back? I feel more than thankful for the way in which he is able to go - but it is pathetic to see Willie pretending. They had a gala reception at Cliveden and Revere left there at 2.30 and on to Shorncliffe. Jack lay in the garden all day - we repacked him and off to town at 9.30, and Bill to Aldershot. . .

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On the 11th of June he writes to Mrs. Brewster:

How I wish I could have a quiet time with you all at Mt Kisco. One gets 'fed up' with this tragedy but there are compensations. The pluck of the women is wonderful - & the burden of the loss comes on them. You must be very worried about the American note which we had hoped to see in this morning's papers. I hope a peaceful way may be found as the U. S. can do so much as a neutral. Revere spent ~~Tuesday~~^{Sunday} with us & is now at Southampton getting out supplies &c. They expect to cross this week. He has got very interested in the work. Such a satisfactory laddie-you would love him. . .

Opposite June 13th Osler has written in his account-book: "Perrin's Library", an entry which is explained by A. W. Pollard's paragraph in his introduction to the "Incunabula Medica" (1923), though he does not perhaps know why the holiday was snatched just at this time.

[Osler]

In June, 1915, he tried to snatch a brief bookman's holiday and asked two of his friends in the Society to share it with him. Starting on a Saturday in his motor from Oxford they lunched at the Ladies' College, Cheltenham, where Miss Fegan was then running her little school of librarianship, and then spent a wonderful afternoon among the treasures of the Phillipps manuscripts. Gloucester was reached that evening and after service on Sunday there was a visit to the Cathedral library. The afternoon brought the little party to Malvern for another wonderful time with Mr. Dyson Perrin's illuminated manuscripts. In the midst of it the

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inevitable happened and a telephone message from Oxford called Osler to a patient farther north. He insisted on his friends completing the programme and they had a happy morning at Worcester Cathedral library and a delightful drive back to Oxford. The memory of those three days in the midst of the stress and anxiety of the war remains ineffaceable, all the more so because before the war ended the three friends who shared that brief holiday were united in the deeper community of pain. The holiday is mentioned here because, amidst his strenuous war-work, to have planned this bibliographical weekend for himself and his friends shows how great was the refreshment which Osler found in his love for books, and how generous he was in sharing it with others.

On Thurs day June 16th Lady Osler writes her sister:

I think Bob [Robert Bacon] and W. O. had a long talk about the hospital [Harvard Unit] and then Willie went to the War Office and arranged matters. ~~[Lady Osler writes her sister]~~. Dr. White goes to Neuilly with the Penn. University Hospital lot. . . We had our first letter from Revere yesterday - such a charming letter. Col. Birkett has written so nicely about him. No address on the letter - near the sea somewhere. I have had the blues about the war for several days. I feel perfectly hopeless - everything seems at such a standstill but it may be all right. . .

But this was only for a sister's ears, and rarely for them. For more characteristic of the spirit at 13 Norham Gardens even when things were

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at the worst is the following letter regarding "The Mobilization of Faith"
published in the London Times for June 22nd.

Oxford, June 19th.

Sir: - May I protest against the pessimism of the letter which appeared in today's issue of The Times under the above heading? My friend Mr. Burroughs writes from the cave of Elijah. It is not true that 'since August our faith has wavered and our light has failed.' Can he not hear above the tumult of the wind, the earthquake and the fire the still, small voice which has stirred the Empire to its depths? If, as he says, 'the spiritual forces as were then at our command have been broken and scattered,' it means they were not the weapons of Gideon, but Egyptian reeds fit only to be cast away. The faith worth having in the present crisis has been mobilized, a faith everywhere manifest, whose word is made perfect in sacrifice. In these troublous days, when to many even God's providence seems estranged, it behooves us all, clergy and laity alike, to strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees, and to look back on the past ten months with thankfulness for what has been accomplished, and to face the future with a courage begotten of confidence in ourselves and in our cause. I am, yours, &c.*

*Osler must have written at about the same time his article for popular consumption on "War, Wounds and Disease" in the Quarterly Review (July number; p. 150) containing an especially vivid paragraph on the venereal peril; but the whole tenor of the article is optimistic.

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It A spirit of this sort was what England greatly needed. It was a period of great depression ~~in England~~ and the Rev. E. A. Burroughs had merely voiced the general feeling. The blockade was proving a serious menace. What would America do? Anything but write notes? "The news of the Leyland Liner being torpedoed has just come," writes Lady Osler on the 31st, "and I believe it will settle America now. Heavens, isn't it horrible!"

Huge advertisements were appearing in the papers - AN URGENT CALL FOR HELP IN THE MUNITION CENTRES - accompanied by a picture of the new and hard-working Minister of Munitions; YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS MORE AIRCRAFT, etc., etc. The Government went so far as to pass a Registration Bill and this was better than nothing, but unless the whole nation should be mobilized for compulsory service as in France and Germany, about all that Kitchener and the Government could do was to appeal - to appeal for thrift in the household; to the farmer to raise more food; to the working-men not to strike; and everyone to invest in the great war loan at 4 1/2 per cent!

This was the best a nation could do which still adhered to the principle

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of voluntaryism even though it was evident to all that the cream of the country was being skimmed off and that the cost of a soldier under this system had become nearly prohibitive. The labour situation, too was most serious with disputes on the Clyde and Tyne; at Cardiff where 200,000 miners walked out; ^{even} ~~and~~ the railway workers were demanding higher wages. "There is a sensation over everything," she writes, "that seems like a thunder-cloud - no one quite knows what it is but I call it depression, and with good reason."

On July 10th Oster wrote to J. William White:

Dear J. William: I have written to Makins and to Bowlby [Consultants to the Army in France], both of whom will be delighted, of course, to see you on your way back. They are having a very slack time at present; I hear the hospitals are empty, and the men here are twirling their thumbs in idleness; but, no doubt, it will all change very soon.

I shall be here on and off all the summer. I am going over to the McGill Unit when they get settled and when they get any patients. I have had suggestions from several quarters that satisfactory help could be given by supplying house officers for the hospitals here. Garrod of St. Bartholomew's has interested himself in this and has already had correspondence from a number of men in America. You could discuss the matter with him when you come. . . .

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As he says, it was 'a slack time' so far as the hospitals were concerned, and nothing was worse for the R.A.M.C. than to sit back and twirl their thumbs in comparatively empty hospitals during lulls. The method practised by Osler under these circumstances was to encourage his young friends to engage, as he did himself, ~~at this time~~ in some literary research to take their minds off the war. ^{note} ~~in a letter written in~~ So he writes the middle of July: ^{he says:}

Revere writes most interesting letters. He and his chief seem the only two with much work, as they have not yet opened the hospital. We are in a quiet period; there were 25,000 empty British beds in France last week, and 500 vacant here (Oxford); but there will be work enough later on. We have had Norman and Campbell Gwyn here, and Archie Malloch who has just gone to open a new hospital at Burley-on-the-Hill, the homes of the Finches. I have got him interested in Sir John Finch and Sir James Baines, the David and Jonathon^a of the profession in the 17th century. This is a most interesting story; look them up in the Dictionary of National Biography when you have a moment. Archie has been working at the Bodleian and has got out all sorts of interesting facts. I hope he will get a number of Finch's letters at Burley.*

Oxford?

*All of this led to the publication by Captain Archibald Malloch of a monograph on Finch and Baines (Cambridge University Press, 1917). In the introduction to this 'pleasant but novel task' the author

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says: "I have gone to him [Sir William Osler] in every difficulty that has confronted me in this work and in spite of the immense demands on his time he has ever proved to be, as he has been called before, 'the young man's friend.'"

There were meanwhile many things to be done. The Belgians of course were still in Oxford and by natural processes increasing in numbers. The 'work-shops' continued with ~~an~~^{their} output of pyjamas and so on, also increasing in numbers. And Osler in his not infrequent teasing moods would refer to his wife as a woman of 'push and go' - that at least was the sort of person the Minister of Munitions said the country needed. His own obligations even during 'slack times' were many, in addition to that of being 'Consoler General' to the army. One finds traces of his footsteps in familiar places. Thus:

A Conference was held at Oxford, under the auspices of the Oxfordshire Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis, on July 17th. Representatives of sanitary authorities, Insurance Committees and other bodies attended. Sir William Osler, who presided, moved resolutions urging that the retention of the dispensing system should be regarded as essential in any scheme for dealing with tuberculosis; that no tuberculosis scheme in the county could be considered adequate which did not make provision for coöperation with a voluntary-care and after-care association on the lines suggested by the medical officers of the Local Government Board, etc., etc.

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On July 29th he writes to his Quaker friend H. M. Thomas in

Baltimore:

Dear Harry T. - How's thee? and how's the family and the medical student and Trudeau and Margaret? I wish you were over here in this orgie (sic) of neuroses and psychoses and gaits and paralyses, etc. I cannot imagine what has got into the C.N.S. [central nervous system] of the men, and I see it is as bad in Germany. It is a sort of psychical decerebration. You never dreamt of such gaits - the craziest, un-text-book things. One fellow was just like Blondin on a tight-rope. Hysterical(?) dumbness, deafness, blindness, anaesthesias, galore! I suppose it is the shock and strain, but I wonder if it was ever thus in previous wars. It is a horrid business but we have much to be thankful for at the end of a year. The Germans have not carried out their programme; we have 2 1/2 millions of men under arms and the navy is in command, but the country begins to realize that it is a long affair, 2 or 3 years more, unless there is a sudden smash somewhere. If we go under, Johnnie get your gun! Your turn next. Revere is off with the McGill Unit, Asst. Quartermaster, and working so hard. There are 13 members of my family over. Norman Gwyn has been with us with a broken ankle and his brother with a bullet through his chest. One is dead and one a prisoner. I am very busy and getting a good deal of education, but I am longing for a time when I can spend some hours of each day at the Bodleian. Tell Zoe I wish she could see our garden. Such roses! Grace has been such a worker. Her shop in one of the museum laboratories is a sight. We have 153 Belgians (professors and

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families) 22 professors, and heaven knows what will become of the poor devils. 'Tis an awful tragedy. Love to you all. Ever yours,

W^m Osler.

After his service at the American Ambulance, J. William White paid them a visit in August, and to his wife Lady Osler writes: "I think he has done everything he wanted to do except go down in a Submarine - and that he cannot accomplish. It has been as good as a play to hear our husbands going for each other and calling each other the most awful names." White had rewritten his war pamphlet, and Osler writes to him two weeks later: "Just back from Burley-on-the-Hill. Your New Edition is A.1. & should have a great run here. It is full of good stuff. Will write you a steamer letter. D. the K!" He and Lady Osler had gone for a short visit to Burghley House in Rutland where Mr. Phipps's daughter Mrs. Guest had recently established a convalescent hospital of which Archie Malloch was in charge; and it was there that Malloch's Finch and Baines quest had started. A little later, too, they spent a few days with Lady Wantage at Lockinge House near Oxford, "to meet the Archbishop of

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York, and came away exhausted. There were twelve people and all talked about the war - horrors and mistakes - Willie looked a ghost and could not divert anyone* - no more visits for us." It was while there that the

*Much more to his taste was the visit paid this same month in company with Mr. John Lane on old Lord Sherborne to see the unrecorded portraits of his hero Sir Thomas Browne which Lord Sherborne had inherited through Sir Thomas Browne's mother who had twice married.

Regius began the following letter to Mrs. Brewster - evidently a little depressed by the war talk he had been forced to listen to:

24th [August]

We are off for a day in one of these Anglican paradises in which I hope some day to see you & R. B. & the children. Such gardens & flowers & trees. Still, I wish it were Avalon! It seems ages since I was in America & goodness knows when I shall be able to get away. This awful business gets worse & worse & if the U. S. comes in the complications will be worser! Things look very serious, and we are anxiously waiting. I have a feeling that Germany will back down at the last moment. We are all very depressed about Russia but the truth is she is no match for the highly trained Germans & Krupp is winning. The outlook is much better here, & to have 3 millions of men in training is very hopeful. Munitions are piling up & the feeling in France is optimistic. But it is going to be a slow business. The house keeps full, another wounded nephew back &

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a cousin with shell-shock & a nephew with an infected hand. Grace is hard at work, but there has been much less to do lately as the Hospitals are empty. Revere writes very cheery letters from Etaples. I hope to go over shortly to see the Hospitals & stay a week with the McGill men. We are thankful he is not in the Dardanelles. I have been a great deal away - Cardiff, Paignton & Folkestone. The household is depleted, chauffeur, butler & secretary all gone. I am in despair about the latter as I had just got him properly trained in the Library work. I hope to steal another young chap from the Bodleian

28th.

28th No steamer this week so I brought the unfinished letter home. Such a busy day - Dr. Camac from N. Y. & Dr. Morris from Phila, then Dr. Van Dyke from the Hague & Mr. Yates Thompson, [&] a stranded Johns Hopkins M.D. who has married a German wife, who has refused to go to America; ^{then} a new Belgian professor asking help. So you see we have plenty to distract us. Tomorrow the Pages come to lunch on their way thro to Broadway. He has done so well in London & Mrs. Page is a dear. The Embassy staff too is a great credit, particularly Col. Squier who has made such a strong impression in scientific circles. Kiss the darlings for me. The photos are on the mantelpiece in my bedroom & Grace often talks to that bright-eyed baby. What a delight she must be!

Early in September he paid his long-promised visit to the McGill Unit the first record of which is on a postcard to Mrs. Brewster from Montreuil-sur-mer, saying: "Here with Revere. Such a lovely walled town - the first

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stopping-place of Sterne on his Sentimental Journey. Am sending you a full account of my trip." The account follows:

No. 3 Canada Gen. Hospital . Camiers,
Sept. 7th [Tuesday]

b?

You would be amused to peek through the fly of a tent and see me sitting up in a camp bed with this pad on my knee! Such a comfortable billet! I have not slept in a tent for forty years. Its a bit breezy, and cold & cramped but snug enough - considering. I crossed yesterday from Folkestone to Boulogne as they sent word the Hospital was full & in good working order. Three miles out from Folkestone we passed close to the Cable boat, the Monarch, potted at 2 a m by a submarine, the masts out of water & surrounded by trawlers. They have never got one of these fast trans-channel boats that cross twice daily. Col. Birkett, Maj. Howard, Billy Francis (a nephew) & Revere met me on the dock. R. looking so well & brown. The McGill unit (~~59~~) is stationed at Camiers about twelve miles south of Boulogne, with six other general Hospitals, all in tents. It is close to the sea, from wh. it is separated by sand dunes while behind the Downs rise to about 300-400 feet. In the camp are about 8000 people, so that from the top of the Downs the spread of white tents makes a most attractive sight, and far away towards Etaples one can see a second group of tents & huts. The McGill men are so nice, many of them old students & all old friends. They have been here for about three months getting settled & having a very quiet time, as there has been no fighting. Revere is assistant quartermaster and has got into the job very well. He

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has about 40 men to control & has to do with the supplies &c. He sometimes feels that he should be off in the fighting line & of course if he wishes we shall not oppose it; but he is not much cut out for a soldier's life & loathes the whole business of war. The hospital tents are from India, holding 40-50 beds & the inner lining is of that attractive Cawnpore material of various colours & patterns. Such a nice set of nurses - all from the Royal Victoria or the Montreal General Hospitals. Capt. Law the quartermaster is an old family friend. Next to us is the Harvard Unit with 800 beds & at Etaples is a Chicago Unit with the same number. The wounded & sick come from the Ypres district every few days & are the result of the casual fighting (& the ordinary illnesses - now & again a typhoid). I shall make an inspection of all the hospitals in the District. The weather is glorious and we all sat outside the mess tent until 10 p m

Sunday eve.

We have had a splendid day. Church parade at 10.30, excellent sermon from the Chaplain who explained that war wiped out all sects in camps! Then we motored to a lovely spot Harelot for lunch - Campbell Howard, Billy Francis, Revere & I. Nice old inn with tables on a lovely lawn. Then across country to Montreuil sur mer (once, it is now 10 miles inland!) a walled town of extraordinary beauty. One wonders not to hear more of it. I never saw such walls & moats & in such good preservation. Revere is devoted to the place as it was at the inn, from which I posted a card to you, that Sterne rested from the first night of his Sentimental Journey. At M. are about 1000 of the Indian troops many in hospital. Poor devils, they look very much out of place. This is no country for them - too cold & wet.

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Wednesday eve.

Such an experience! I had not asked to go to the Front as I knew leave was not granted; but the dear old Commandant at Etaples said he would send me: so at 8 a m yesterday Col McCrae, who has been thro the whole district & Capt Rhea & I started off. If you look on the map we went north ~~East~~ East to Merville to see a big dressing station and mobile laboratory, in charge of two old friends. Here we saw the wounded brought in from the trenches among them the speaker's son - Maj. Lowther. Shot thro the chest. It was a sad business but the nurses & doctors seemed to know their work, & the officers wards were very comfortable. Many of the men are sent on in the big ambulance trains the same eve. Then to Armentières which is a great centre & to Nieppe, the Canadian headquarters, where I saw many old friends. Stationary balloons, aeroplanes, soldiers, camps, billets in farms, brigades of artillery on march - such a scene! In the field next to the chief med. officers house a big new German aeroplane was brought down the day before our visit. We had hoped to be able to go the upper road to Bailleul & Hazebrouck ^{Brouck} but it had been shelled the day before and was impassable, so we kept along the second line of trenches & in the eve. saw many returning & going to them. Here for the first time we heard the boom of guns, every few minutes. About 3 miles from Nieppe we saw the bombardment of aeroplanes by the German aircraft guns. The first one was 3000-4000 feet up at the edge of a light cloud, & within 5 minutes 42 shells had exploded near it. We could see the bright flash & then a puff-ball of black smoke, quite circular which gradually increased to about the size of the moon & took 15-20 minutes to disappear. Within half an hour we saw another, much closer - 122 puff-balls could be counted against

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the clouds, many seem^{ed} so close, but the aeroplane sailed about taking the usual daily observations. It was a great sight the most wonderful I have seen. Miles & miles of motor lorries line the roads waiting to go up in the eve. The whole country is alive with troops. The peasants are hard at work getting in their crops, even between the lines of trenches. We visited Hazebrouck & on to St Omer the headquarters. Col McCrae has been fighting all thro the district and took us to several spots on which his battery was stationed. Everywhere great squares of graves - marked with the names of the men of the Regiments. The villages do not look much battered except at one place, just where we crossed the Belgian frontier, but there was scarcely a church standing. Except for the soldiers St Omer seems untouched by the war. We passed the big aeroplane camp, just outside the town. We have done about 190 miles & not a mile of bad road, in spite of the heavy traffic

Thursday.

We had an experience last night 11.30 - a big convoy came, 15 steel cars - all beautifully fitted 34 beds in each, nurse & doctors. We went to see the men unloaded. Splendid organization - about 30 ambulances. The men were lifted out 4 in 4 minutes & I got into an ambulance with them, an Irishmen wounded in the head, an appendicitis, a typhoid & a bad shrapnel wound of leg. All were smoking! It took 7 minutes to the Hospital & the 4 were in bed within 27 minutes from the arrival of the train. I have been to Wimereux, north of Boulogne to see the big infectious hospital & I shall stay a day there on my way back, as they have all the typhoid & paratyphoid cases of the whole district centred there. Extraordinarily few for the enormous number of men.

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And a week after his return home he added this postscript:

I had hoped to finish & send this off but I got back to a press of work & have been away almost every day. It was a wonderful experience & I wish I could have stayed longer, but I have engagements in Leeds Oct. 1st. two addresses, which I have to write within a week. Grace has been away with friends in the south of England, her first holiday for a year. I am very well & very brown. I must send you a copy of my fathers journal & papers which my brother E. B. has had printed here. You will be interested to look it over. It is a private, family affair, not for distribution. R. B. will see in it a good bit of our Clarendon Press work. How I wish I could be with you at Mt. Kisco. I do not believe this horrid business will ever be over, but we are keeping up our courage. Love to the darlings & to R. B. & Uncle Ned.

A cheerful enough letter - just the sort many people wrote after their first visit to France. Meanwhile seemingly one of the Belgian families had left Oxford for Holland:

. . .They insisted on going [Lady Osler writes her sister] and said they could not stay on charity any longer. At 9.30 Thursday morning I was to be seen in the car going to the station with 9 ~~Perams~~^{P—s} & ^{their} bags - followed by a cart full of luggage and another Belgian with a male and female bicycle. I should think it had been a prosperous year for the ~~Perams~~^{P—s} - they came with five children and two Gladstone bags - they left with six children - 4 trunks - a cradle - and two bicycles. The ~~Perams~~^{M—s} have left too. My wee house is empty now but we shall put some others in soon I think.

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The Harvard Unit had come, and gone to France but was not faring well. New campaigners are apt to be restive in war and ^w/hospitals dissatisfaction comes at idle times with empty beds. As usual, the 'Consoler General' enters the scene, and from the Athenaeum the day of his return he writes to President Lowell:

Dear Lowell I have just come back from France, where I paid a visit to the Harvard Unit; and I am sure you will like to know my impressions. The quarters are good, tents of the fine Durbar variety, the wards are most attractive. At first patients were scanty, later they have been numerous and many important cases have been treated. The Commandant, Sir Alan Perry, is a charming man who has done all in his power to make things run smoothly. The staff is A.1. I saw the work in several of the departments, and ~~it~~ could not but be impressed with the very valuable experience it has been for the men, so varied and so unusual. The X-ray work is just what one could have expected from the well known expert of the M.G.H. The Dental men have been a revelation and I saw several cases of terrible mutilation of the face on the high road to repair. The nurses have done splendidly. I was delighted to meet them at a tea kindly given me by the matron. It was a peculiar pleasure to dine with the mess and to meet so many men of the younger generation, all of whom seem treading the footsteps of that great group - the Warrens, Jacksons, Bigelows and Bow-

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ditches - who made Harvard famous in the past. I do hope arrangements have been made to continue the work. It would be a thousand pities if the younger men lost this unique opportunity. . . .

On Wednesday the 29th he wrote a line to Adami saying: "I am off to Leeds, Newcastle & Manchester tomorrow - back Tuesday. Come for next weekend, 9th - do. All sorts of things to talk about to you." The Canadian Medical Corps, it may be added, was having its troubles. But meanwhile at Leeds at the opening of the medical school he gave on ~~August 15th~~ ^{October 1st or 2nd?} the two addresses he had spoken of in an earlier letter. Sir Berkeley Moynihan - 'Carnifex Maximus' - with whom he ~~stayed~~ ^{remained} in bed during the morning and wrote the "Nerve and 'Nerves'" talk given before the Leeds Luncheon Club - 'a little medicated advice on how to get the best work out of the human machine of the nation in these times of stress and strain.'

The other day I asked a battle-bronzed veteran fresh from an inferno of shell fire if he thought any single factor would decide the war. "Yes," he said, "nerve: the men who can best stand the racket will win." I

*The next page
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need make up
put in after
down the side.*

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must confess to a little surprise, as I expected him to say men, or money, or munitions. . . . The phrase is a good one, dating from the days when English bowmen fought where now not arrows but shell and shrapnel darken the air. It means command of the machine and all its resources. . . . Some years ago, at Columbia University, New York, I heard that American Socrates, William James, deliver a remarkable address on "The Energies of Men," in which he contended that our organism has stored up reserves of energy ordinarily not in use, but that may be called upon; deeper and deeper strata of material ready for use, on tap if we care to call upon it. . . . Our energy budget has really never been exploited. Kipling has the secret in a verse in the famous poem "If": -

If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them "hold on."

As with the individual so with the nation. Nerve is a special trait of the Briton, who has always displayed a dogged determination and a capacity to hold on, so well expressed in the lines I have just quoted. The nation, too, has its reserves of energy, upon which in the present trial we must call. We are standing well the change of gear. New and unthought-of levels of energy are available, on tap at will. . . .

There is a state the very opposite of that of which we have been speaking, seen in man and nations, and best described by the word nerve, a word not in the dictionary. It is slang, but we all know the meaning, the unstrung state, the inability to get work, or the best work, out of the machine, a jumpiness and instability. A man may inherit a weak, irritable nervous system, another may spoil a good one with bad habits or bad

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training, or a good one may be shocked out of action by the blows of circumstance. . . . Unfortunately, it is not a matter for the individual alone. 'Nerves' may attack whole communities. We are all apt to be swayed by states of mind which are rarely associated with any clear consciousness of their causes. They may be nothing more than moods, but they spread like measles. or any other infection. What a contagion is fear, a state in which the nerves are unstrung. How its voice rings through history. The spirit of fear may come on a people like pestilence, and in the Middle Ages was responsible for that black record of witches and witchcraft. Waves of emotion play on a man's nerves as the wind on an Aeolian harp. . . . We get 'nervy,' and lose control of the machine. Judgment becomes difficult, and we are swayed by emotions that sweep over the crowd regardless of any basis in truth. We become weak-minded, and believe anything any Ananias says. Who would have dreamt that so early in the war there could have been so many liars in the country as the men and women who saw Russian troops! ⁽¹⁶⁾ An instability of this sort leaves us easy prey to

5/ [*There is a story, perhaps apochryphal, told by Sir Walter Raleigh, of how Osler at the time maliciously scattered the ends of some partly consumed Russian cigarettes on the tracks along the Oxford station.

the Yellow Press. . . . The "Liar" of Lucian should be reprinted and spread broadcast as the true model for these modern Cretans.

Collectively, we need steadying, more self-control, more cultivation of the will, which alone has the key to our reserves of unused energies. We should avoid everything that artificially stimulates, and so irritates the nervous system. It indicated a certain lack of nerve, an oyster-like flabbiness in the nation, not to have followed the King's example in the matter of alcohol. Nothing so weakens the will of the worker, of mind or

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of muscles, as leaning upon that Egyptian reed. Too much tobacco also increases the irritability of the nervous system, and many of our young soldiers smoke far more than is good for their hearts or brains. Another serious promotor of 'nerves' is the combination of gossip, gabber and gas which we have dealt out by the penny dreadfuls, and too often poured by people into our too willing ears. I wish we could catch and intern one person, a lying knave, an Autolycus, who flits from house to house, in most, alas! very welcome, called 'a friend of mine.' That appalling third person is responsible for apprehension and mistrust where confidence should reign, and very often for a limp, flabby public opinion instead of 'nerve' - that well-strung state so needful for our final victory.

But "Science and War" the other address, delivered before the Medical School, was not written in a morning in bed. Some of its paragraphs deserve quoting, as they show his state of mind:

Our young minds are trained to regard warfare as one of the prerogatives of Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, who 'teachest my hands to war and my fingers to fight.' With man's conception of a great war in Heaven has passed into current belief one of the strongest of popular dogmas - that of a personal devil. Nurtured on the Old Testament, I recall as a child my terror at the recital of the slaughter of the thousands by the Israelites, when they spared neither man nor beast, woman nor child. After the ears of my understanding were opened it was but small comfort to know that these countless thousands existed only in the imagination of the historian of petty tribes of Palestine. The pride, pomp, and circumstance of war have so captivated the human mind that its horrors are deliberately mini-

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mized. The soldier embodies the heroic virtues, and the camp is the nursery of fortitude and chivalry. The inspiration of the nation is its battles. Crecy and Agincourt, Trafalgar and Waterloo, are more notable events in history than Magna Charta, the execution of King Charles, or the Declaration of American Independence. . . . For more than a century the world had been doing well - everywhere prosperity and progress. The French Revolution and founding of the American Republic seemed to left humanity to a level on which might be realized practically the brotherhood of man. There had been bloody and and grievous wars in the nineteenth century, but there were such hopeful features that the new century opened with peace congresses and peace palaces. Remarkable and unheard-of incidents seemed to indicate a change of heart among the nations. Following the Spanish-American War, Cuba, the Pearl of the Antilles, fell to the United States by conquest, only to be restored to its rightful owners. The Philippine Islands remain in trust by the same nation to have and to hold for its inhabitants whenever they are ready. South Africa, conquered at the cost of much blood and money, was made a nation by its conquerors. There were other considerations; commerce knew no boundaries, and commerce was the uncrowned king to whom all paid homage. An intellectual comity had sprung up between the nations, fostered by a growing interchange of literature and maintained by gatherings whose Pentacostal character lent hope to the dream of Isaiah of a day when in the spirit of wisdom and understanding Ephraim should not vex Judah and Judah should not vex Ephraim.

And some of us had indulged the fond hope that in the power man had gained over nature had arisen possibilities for intellectual and social development such as to control collectively his morals and emotions, so

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that the nations would not learn war any more. We were foolish enough to think that where Christianity had failed Science might succeed, forgetting that the hopelessness of the failure of the Gospel lay not in the message, but in its interpretation. The promised peace was for the individual - the world was to have tribulations; and Christ expressly said: 'Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace but a sword.' The Agou ben Adhems woke daily from their deep dreams of peace, and lectured and published pamphlets and held congresses, while Krupp built 17-inch howitzers and the gun range of the super-Dreadnoughts increased to eighteen miles! . . . Professor Haverfield shocked me the other day by remarking that the Greeks, with all their refinement, were a match for the worst of us today. This drove me to Thucydides, where I found a parallel with Belgium in the treatment of Melos by the Athenians. He gives the wonderful dialogue in a cold, clear style befitting the hard barbarity of the transaction. The delegates from Athens urged: 'What is right is estimated by the equality of power to compel.' 'The powerful exact what they can, the weak grant what they must.' The Melians wished to remain quiet and to be friends, and to force them to take sides they said would only make enemies of all the neutrals - and then there were the gods! To which the Athenians replied: 'As regards the favour of heaven, we trust that we, too, shall not fall short of it: they always maintain dominion wherever they are the stronger.' It was the case of the Walrus and the Carpenter, and the Athenian delegates retired with the remark: 'We bless your simplicity; we do not admire your folly.' And Book V. concludes in a twentieth-century 'might is right' fashion: 'They surrendered at discretion to the Athenians who put to death all the male adults, and made slaves of the women and

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children,... as for the country, they inhabited it themselves.'

In spite of unspeakable horrors war has been one of the master forces in the evolution of a race of beings that has taken several millions of years to reach its present position. During a brief fragment of this time - ten thousand or more years - certain communities have become civilized, as we say, without, however, losing the savage instincts ground into the very fibre of their being by long ages of conflict. Suddenly, within a few generations, man finds himself master of the forces of nature. In the fullness of time a new dispensation has come into the world. Let us see in what way it has influenced his oldest, and most attractive occupation.

From this
~~And~~ he went on to speak of 'the influence of the new dispensation of science on the old practice of war' - first of science as a destructive agent, and he told of his recent impressions in France; and then of science as an agent in the prevention of disease in war, a subject far more after his own heart. "Apollo, the 'far darter' is a greater foe to man than Mars," he said. "The death of a soldier from disease merits the reproach of Armstrong:

Her bravest sons keen for the fight have dy'd
 The death of cowards and of common men -
 Sunk void of wounds and fall'n without renown.

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And what shall be our final judgment [he said in closing] - for or against science? War is more terrible, more devastating, more brutal in its butchery, and the organization of the forces of nature has enabled man to wage it on a titanic scale. More men will be engaged and more will be killed and wounded in a couple of years than in the wars of the previous century. To humanity in the gross, science seems a monster, but on the other side is a great credit balance - the enormous number spared the misery of sickness, the unspeakable tortures saved by anaesthesia, the more prompt care of the wounded, the better surgical technique, the lessened time in convalescence, the whole organization of nursing; the wounded soldier would throw his sword into the scale for science - and he is right.

To one who is by temperament and education a Brunonian and free from the 'common Antipathies' and 'National repugnances' one sad sequel of the war will be, for this generation at least, the death of international science. An impassable intellectual gulf yawns between the Allies and Germany, whose ways are not our ways and whose thoughts are not our thoughts. That she has made herself a reproach among the nations of the earth is a calamity deplored by all who have fought against Chauvinism in science, and a bitter regret to those of us who have had close affiliations with her, and lifelong friends among her professors, whose devotion to science has made every worker in every subject the world over their debtor. . . . With death war dies, and there is no hatred in the grave. . . . It was a noble motive that prompted the Warden and Fellows of New College to put upon the roll of honour in their hall the name of a German Rhodes scholar, one of her sons, though an enemy, who had fallen in battle for his country, an action resented by certain narrow-minded Philistines in the press. I

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should like to pay a last tribute of words to Paul Ehrlich, one of the masters of science, who has recently passed away. . . . The brilliant labours of such a man transcend national limitations, and his name will go down to posterity with those of his countrymen, Virchow and Koch, as one of the creators of modern pathology. . . . This old earth has rarely had a worse year than that through which we have just passed. Men's hearts are failing for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming upon it. Though final deliverance from strife will not be in our day, let us not despair. Only just awake, the race is sore let and hindered by passions and practices, strong as animal instincts, which millions of years of struggle have ground into its fibre. I have just finished reading Henry (Fairfield) Osborn Taylor's last book, "Deliverance", in which he sketches the ways in which our ancestors of all times and countries have adapted themselves to the fears and hopes of their nature. From such a story of incessant and successful adjustments one may take a Pisgah-sight of a day when 'nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.'

Order
Without a secretary ~~his~~ brief letters of the period were usually on

blank postcards such as this.

They meant much to the receivers

thereof, as did ^{this} the one for ex-

ample addressed to R. Tait McKenzie,

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Farnborough, Hants; and Professor McKenzie writes a page of explanation of his early work with the War Office in the establishment of Command Depots for the retraining of wounded and damaged men preparatory to re-enlistment (work which subsequently was taken over by the organization of Sir Robert Jones), and how Osler came to see him and subsequently sent James Mackenzie and Wilson who stayed a week to study the effect of graded exercise on the heart cases.

Meanwhile because neither had

~~One must turn to~~ Lady Osler's letters to learn that ~~anything un-~~

Since time came over

for the hospital is done.

Her sister

~~usual is going on.~~ She had written ~~on~~ October 5th:

They are terribly busy [at Camiers] patients in and out - night and day. Revere has been happier since being so occupied but when he has leave I am sure he will apply to be transferred. The battle is raging, but no body expresses excitement. The losses are too terrible - I think there were four Oxford boys in the Times list today - I mean men who live here, like the Williams' son at Summerfields School, and two Lynam masters. There are 1040 wounded here now and the streets are full. Mrs. Boyce Allen came back to the work-room yesterday after weeks of absence; asked tenderly for you. Her son is safe still, I believe the Canadians have not been in this advance yet. . . Mrs. MacM--- was from Baltimore and he

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from Montreal. They came to live in England just as we did. Friday word came the only son was killed in France - the girls went home for the night and back Saturday p.m. to work. They came to see me this morning - pathetically brave. . .

The summer months in Flanders, where trench warfare had by now become a highly specialized science, had till now been Paradise compared to what had been going on in Gallipoli, where too was what amounted to a military deadlock. Most disconcerting news, meanwhile, was coming from the east where Hindenburg was settling his score with the Russian armies which were in full retreat. The long-expected offensive by their allies on the western front to give them some measure of relief had been delayed ^{from} by want of munitions until September 20th, when came the French attack in Champagne followed by the British thrusts at Hooge and among the slag heaps at Loos and La Bassée. All ^{these} ~~it~~ had amounted to ^{was} besides a few more wrecked villages ^{and} ~~after~~ a few more difficult salients to consolidate, after regiments such as the 9th Black Watch had been piped back with only 100 men and one officer surviving. "A success but not a decision," said Headquarters. "Poor staff work," said the rank and file. But with 200,000 casualties the hitherto idle hospi-

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tals had no time for 'grousing.' The young quartermaster-assistant at Cam-

lers ^{learned from what he then saw that, as soon as opportunity offered, he must join the combatant forces.}
~~was from now on determined to enlist as a combatant.~~

Osler meanwhile kept his head clear and his hands full at home. Typhoid was under control but new diseases were appearing among the soldiers ^{# in England} at home and overseas, against which they were not protected. The following ^{Cyptic} note of October 8th to Sir Humphry D. Rolleston indicates that he was alert for these things.

Dear Rolleston I will send word to Davis Taylor - so pleased to have the case. Have been in Leeds - gassing! & Manchester. Many diarrhoea cases from the Dardanelles at Cliveden -

- 1) simple, which all seem to get, no reaction to Flexner or Shiga
- 2) def. Bac. dy. symptoms & reactions
- 3) Amoebic - one doubtful case. A N.Z-der with bad dys. profound Emaci. &c, gave also Paraty-B reactions, very marked. P.M. shoe-leather colon - many typic. Typhoid ulcers in Ileum.

We have 24 Enterics in one ward from the East ^[paratyphoid] .22 P-Ty. B. 1 P-T. A. & one plain T. - all clinically Typhoid Bismuth & charcoal large doses - seems to do best I must try to come down before long Could not you both get off for a week end? - do. Love to Mrs R. . . .

~~At the Royal Socy of Medicine in Oct 1915 there was held a symposium on the treatment of typhoid fever.~~

And he promptly writes to J. Y. W. MacAlister: "We should have more ^{specific war meetings}

(1) Discussion Paratyphoid Fever, (2) The War Nephri-

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tis (3) Trench Fever (4) The Dardanelles Diarrhoea (5) The Soldiers Heart -
are army medical subjects which need discussion." And the 13th he writes again:

Dear MacAlister Dreyer will open a discussion next week or week
after on P. Ty. ^[paratyphoid] Infections. He has been at the Infectious Hospital, Wimereux for the last 3 mos, and knows the whole business. He thinks Dawson
~~[then Sir Bertrand, Consultant to the B.E.F.]~~ will come. Will you wire him? in yours or my name or both. Torrance has just been back and would not be able he thinks to get away. Failing D. we might find an Army man, failing these I could give our experience of about 30 cases dealing with the Clinical aspects. It is a very important matter [typhoid] - questions are to be asked in the House as to the incidence of T. and Para. T. in the Dardanelles. The present group of 24 which I have under observation are from the East. Dreyer will be here thro' the 1st. week in November. . .

And again on the 21st he writes: "I saw Garrod today. Failing Dawson I will open but D. is the man and he should be asked. It is a most urgent problem.*

*Typhoid though rampant in the East among uninoculated troops had been effectually controlled in France; but many new and obscure fevers had begun to appear there among the troops - fevers cryptically recorded in the hospitals as 'P.U.O.' (Pyrexia of unknown origin). Among them were the paratyphoids and trench fevers, *polyneuritis, infectious jaundice etc which gradually became differentiated,*

I will ask tomorrow at the Army Med. College of any man there who knows Para. Typ."

All this led up to an important meeting at the Royal Society of Medicine - one of the series of meetings, indeed, which he promoted and engineered. The first of them was held on October 19th,* dealing with cerebrospinal menin-

*Osler opened the discussion. Dr. Gardner Robb followed with an account of the Belfast epidemic in which Flexner's serum had been

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used with most favourable results. H.D. Rolleston, Michael Foster and others also participated. The discussions, revised and amplified by the participants, were published as a series of articles in the Practitioner, January 1916. There Osler attributes the failure to get results with the serum treatment in the British camps to the fact that inert sera had been used.

gitis; this was followed by the meetings of November 9th and 23rd devoted to paratyphoid fever, a malady akin to typhoid which had become ^{so} prevalent and was causing anxiety ^{at Herby warles.} ~~in the army.~~

One of the many sojourners at the Open Arms during these days entered in his journal: "Sir W^m has a big job with his letters and no secretary. Mr. Hill from the Bodleian comes in the p.m. to work on the Catalogue. But in the evening he and Lady O. write letters up in the sitting-room and have to buy stamps by the £5-worth." From the sitting-room earlier in the month there had issued a batch of long-hand invitations "requesting the pleasure of your company to meet Dr. Beale of the American Hospital, Paignton, at luncheon, 1.15 Wednesday 13th, at the Imperial Restaurant, Regent Street." And in a letter to her sister of October 15th, Lady Osler says:

... Wednesday W. O. did one of his angelic strokes. He had a luncheon of twenty-two for Dr. Beale who is leaving Paignton and returning to Worcester. He has really done very well - and the ladies of the Committee have made him a presentation of silver. Dr. Penhallow is taking the job

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- he had just arrived when we were there. Did I tell you Mrs. Whitelaw Reid is paying Dr. Penhallow and about twelve nurses. Why has the Red Cross ge-busted? Well, the luncheon was in London of course. Mr. Page was there - Sir Alfred Keogh of the War Office - Head Naval Med. Man, I forget his name - and all most important and representative men - just a simple luncheon. They toasted the King, and Sir Alfred Keogh thanked Dr. Beale for England for the work done at Paignton. . .

Nor were Canadians and temporary American volunteers the only ones to occupy their thoughts. There were English Tommies as well, one of whom, Osler's boy in the Oxford Museum, to whom at the very end this narrative must return, writes from somewhere on October 25th:

To Lady Osler. My Lady, Thank you very much for the parcel which arrived today. It is very kind of you to keep me so well supplied in tobacco. The jersey will be very handy as it takes up very little room in my pack. Judging from the temperature today, we shall want all the clothes we can possibly wear! It is a dreary wet day and we have just come back from an inspection by the King and the French President. Had it been a fine day, it would have been a very gay scene, with the many different coloured uniforms. We are back at the village resting just now, and go back into the trenches in a few days' time. We have a very good time back here. There is a barn rigged up as a library, with all the most recent periodicals and newspapers. We generally have a concert and one or two

*Make sure
of this.
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footer matches each time we come back for a rest. We are out trench digging most days, but find time for a game at Bridge or a quiet read most nights. We had a rather rough time up in the trenches the last time. The Germans shelled our front line with some very heavy shells and 'Minewerfers.' We had one or two narrow escapes, but managed to come up smiling as usual. The 'Minewerfers' are huge things, something like an oil drum, filled with high explosive. You can actually see them coming through the air. They make a peculiar droning noise, and one gets flat down in the bottom of the trench and hopes for the best. One burst in the next traverse to us, when we were going along the communication trench, and I quite expected the trench to fall in on top of us. We were hard at work all night repairing the parapet and barbed wire, which were knocked about pretty badly. I am sorry to hear Benning [the chauffeur, who had been invalided home *from Cairo*] has cracked up. I am afraid a good many will be down with pneumonia this winter! I hear from William [the butler] occasionally and he seems very keen on coming out here. So were we, but I don't think any of us would grouse at the monotony of Writtle or any other village in England! I am glad to say that Mother keeps very well, although she worries rather because I have not been home on leave yet. The leave goes on slowly but surely, so I hope to be home for a few days, if it is not till 1916! I did not find a scarf in the parcel, but a pair of mitts instead. Yours very respectfully,

A. Taylor.

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That Osler continued to be uncomfortable about his son is not apparent from anything he says himself, but confession of this constantly appears in his wife's letters. "General Jones asked to see Willie the other day and said he heard Revere was uneasy, and proposed since they were all so fond of him in the C.A.M.C. that he be transferred to a Field Ambulance which means the danger zone at the front. I would sacrifice anything to know the boy's conscience was at rest. Poor Willie simply won't or can't talk about it."

On November 4th Osler writes to J. William White:

Thanks for the Leidy drawing in anticipation. What an artist he was! I had his Rhizopod book at the Lab. only yesterday showing the amoebae pictures to a girl who is working at pyorrhoea. I am glad you are going to Canada. Tell them not to listen to the newspapers and the politicians - but to send along the men & the money. I had a great visit to France - was in your tracks very often. You 'took the cake.' Dear old Makins was delighted. We are very busy. I am on the road three or four days of the week - twice already this week to Cliveden where we have a most interesting set of para-typhoid cases - today the rounds of 3 camps seeing inoculated men who have had the triple vaccine at one dose, typhoid, para A & para B. A majority of the cases from France & the Dardanelles are paratyphoid &

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have already been vaccinated against ordinary T. I was at the Asquith's on Sunday. A. has been wretched & Mrs. A. He has a hard team to drive. Mr. A asked about you at once. A. was chuckling over the Baltic business as they scarcely expected the submarines would do so well. This Cavell business has been a great aid in the recruiting. [Edith Cavell was condemned October 11th and executed October 12th]. I know her sister very well at Henley. Grace is at it hard. More than 100 workers now in two laboratories. Revere is well, but they have not enough to do. Sometimes worked day & night when big convoys come & then two weeks of idleness. We hope he will get a few days at home before long.

Revere's long-expected few days' leave finally came, one exciting incident of which is recorded in his father's account-book, as follows:

Th. Nov. 11th. Narrow escape of the library. ^{Grace} ~~Edy~~ O. awakened 3.30 a.m. with smell of smoke in the house, went downstairs and found the dining-room on fire; deuce of a time, 25 minutes before the fire brigade arrived. Meanwhile we got many of the more important books into the drawing-room annex. Unfortunately the Incunabula and MSS were in the room above the dining-room which was full of smoke and very hot. Revere and I went in with wet towels over our mouths and got out three or four shelves and then had to stop. Fortunately the firemen got it under control easily, but it was a narrow escape. The MS of Paul Sarpi and the two belonging to Grimani* were in the dining-room and got badly scorched.

*In this volume, ^L Siber D. Grimani Cardinalis S. Marci, Osler has written: "This MS. has come back from Maltby with the old binding repaired. ^{the} the old parchment covers were curled and baked."

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It was a close call, this fire which threatened the destruction of his collection of books, for a little more and the ceiling would have fallen.

It must have given them all a great shock but their reaction to it was characteristic. Lady Osler's next letter to her sister gives an amusingly tragic account of what went on during the half-hour's turmoil before the arrival of the Oxford firemen who said, "Good evening, have you a fire?" Then that same morning, after a pick-up breakfast the Regius and his son went off to town as though nothing had happened, to the bookshop of Thos. J. Wise, ^{Hampstead,} ~~Hamsted~~, N.W., to pursue their favourite recreation, leaving the woman with push and go to begin clearing up the mess - a matter which took many weeks. ~~and~~ they lived in other parts of the house, while the dining-room was being repaired, ^{and} ~~and~~ when they ^{could return to} ~~got back in~~ it, this, the only room in the house not previously lined with ^{valuable} books, now had a long bookcase along one wall. ¶ The episode recalls Osler's reaction to other fires, for example his telegram to Trudeau after the conflagration in Saranac, urging him to take courage, for a fire invariably brought out

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the phoenix bird. Similarly, when the house at 3 West Franklin Street was threatened by the conflagration in Baltimore which destroyed the larger part of the University property in the city, he took it most philosophically; and likewise, when McGill suffered from the fire which all but destroyed the valuable collections in the pathological laboratory - fortunately leaving his own specimens unharmed - he wired that nothing improved a University so much as a fire. He seems to have been pursued by fires - there had been one at Dundas in which all his home letters had been burned.

J. William White has not been well, and on the 18th one of Osler's characteristic postcards to him reads:

How goes it J. W.? I hope better. Drop a p.c. occasionally & report progress. Revere home for 5 days. Looking very fit. He is off to a field ambulance near Poperinghe. Burnt out the dining room Friday 3³⁰ a m. Deuce of a scare but no books lost. Love to Mrs. W. Yours W.O.

Revere had gone back on the 13th to rejoin the McGill Unit which was having its troubles, and Osler as usual was playing the rôle of

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adjuster and intermediary. He writes Adami on the 24th that he is told the Jesuit College back of Boulogne to which they are assigned is a hopeless hole but not to worry Jones about it. "They have been living in a beastly spot as it is, but I have written Birkett to do what he can to make the old place of service. It is not a good thing to get a first class group of men disgruntled and unhappy." Revere's transfer, meanwhile, was postponed until the hospital should be moved - an event which did not take place till Camiers had become a sea of mud, and one black and stormy night all the big marquees with 'their attractive Cawnpore material' more fit for service in India, pulled out their tent-pegs and were levelled to the ground. "It is rough on Willie," writes Lady Osler, "to have all these university units who get muddled appeal to the War Office through him and he is dreadfully cut up about the McGill ill luck." In years to come many another unit, American and Canadian likewise, while meeting the varied and trying fortunes of war, ^{used him - the Consul General - as an intermediary ^{to the War Office} in forwarding ~~the~~ protests ~~through him to the War De-~~} protested against their apparent ill luck.

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~~partment. The 'Consoler General.'~~

On November 25th he writes to H. M. Thomas:

'Tis sad to hear of Trudeau's death, but he made a fine and successful fight. It was in the Times, but I only glance at the papers these days, so missed it. I heard of it in London on Tuesday and just had time to write a brief obituary note for the Lancet of this week. You will miss him sadly. What a strong man he became and how helpful to others. Few men have done better work and what an example to invalids.

We are all well - still very busy. I wish you could see these nerve cases, terrible wrecks from the shell shock and such unusual symptoms. Grace is at work all day. We had the dining-room burnt out last week. Only precious thing lost was that nice Vernon plaque of me which melted to a ball. Revere was at home^{...} and he and I got out the incunabula from the upstairs room until it got too hot. R. is so well. There is not enough to do with the McGill Unit and he feels that he should be at the front. No daylight yet in this horrid mess. Recruiting is wonderful. There will be 3 - 4 millions of men under arms soon. All will be needed. It is going to be a long business. The loss among our friends is shocking - Schafer, Moore, Rolleston, Garrod, Handford, Herringham and others have all lost boys. There are practically no students here - only 20 at Ch. Ch. Love to all at home. I hope Hal is in good form.

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In his tribute to Trudeau he wrote:

~~How true it is that ill-health, the bridle of Theages Plato calls it, may concentrate a man's resources, and bring out qualities of work, the fruits of the spirit, that may be missed in the hurly-burly of the work-a-day world. This was the case with Edward Trudeau. Of no man I have met are the noble words which Matthew Arnold uses of his father more true, and they will find an echo in the hearts of thousands to whom his life and words have been a comfort: -~~

We were weary, and we
Fearful, and we in our march
Fain to drop down and to die.
Still thou turnedst and still
Beckonedst the trembler, and still
Gavest the weary thy hand.

Only an idealist can be an optimist. Trudeau had a fine outlook on life. ~~Once he wrote to me, 'I have been in the grip of the tiger and in bed now for five weeks, but if my body is harassed and shrivelled by disease my soul is full of hope.'~~ In the United States and Canada we all loved him for his strong love of all that was best in the profession. In one letter to me he said: 'Are there no other ideals than efficiency and success? I know you hate sentiment; but with some of us sentiment stands for a good deal, and is a real factor in the problems of life; it is often the very spirit of that mysterious "ego" which governs our actions and shapes our lives after certain ideals; and to my mind no field offers such possibilities for the development of high ideals as does the medical profession.'

Have I read this?

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he said in his tribute to Trudeau: and
 'Sentiment governs our actions and shapes our lives,' Osler perhaps on
 the very day ^{*these words were*} ~~this was~~ ^{*he*} written made a mark for the loss of another son
 against the names of one of his friends, ^{*who has already made the great sacrifice*} ~~all of whom had lost boys.~~

For thus, opposite the list of "present members" in his copy of Payne's
 History of the College Club, he checked off the losses ^{*one by one as they were*} ~~they had~~ sus-
 tained - ^{*in one case before the end, three marks for or many sons.*} ~~one of them, as many as three sons.~~ His own turn was to come.

But the fathers of newly dead boys and boys still alive in those days
 in England, however much they ached for one another, made no outward
 sign, exchanged no letters of condolence, but struggled on with their
 day's work uninterrupted.

To learn the most about Osler one must take recourse again to the
 letters of others.

You ask how he looks [Lady Osler writes her sister, December 1st] -
 very well I think - except just lately perhaps, because I know his heart
 aches about the new danger to Revere but as I said yesterday we have not
 heard yet where he is. Everyone says W.O. looks well, but why he is not
 worn out I do not know. His ^{*Correspondence*} ~~letters~~ ^{*is*} alone ~~are~~ too dreadful. If he would
 let me I could give up everything and help him a lot - but he won't. The

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thing that wearies me, and him too but he won't say so, is the continual strain of talking. Every day for weeks there has been an extra person at luncheon - someone wanting something. Today a female doctor from Boston, who came for a letter to a Swiss doctor as she is going to work in Zurich. Yesterday it was a Canadian nurse wanting a job. Tomorrow it will be a parson wanting to go to France, and Friday it will be all the Harvard Unit at luncheon in Christ Church Hall and tea here at 4.30. The demands on him never stop. At Cliveden if he doesn't go every Monday they are dreadfully annoyed and Nancy telephones to know why - and says her children are weeping for him. . . .

And on that particular Friday December 3rd at 4.30 p.m., she writes to

another who will be interested:

I am waiting to receive the Harvard Unit for tea, and enclose programme* of the day's proceedings, and I fear some may come in ambulances -

*A printed card: HARVARD UNIVERSITY UNIT. 2nd Contingent. Visit to Oxford. December 3rd, 1915. This gave an itinerary of the hospitals, laboratories, etc., to be visited between 11.30 a.m. and 5.00 p.m., ending with an 'exhibition of 20 of the works that have chiefly influenced Science and Medicine.' As can be seen, he took a vast deal of trouble to give these volunteer organizations a good start and a pleasant impression. It was a great disappointment to him that the Johns Hopkins people did not send a Unit. He writes the Dean: "When one has lived a completely comfortable life, to be wet and cold and muddy for weeks at a time, tests a fellow's mettle," and he adds: "all the same get your boats ready - if we go under you come next."

for they must be dead. I wish you could have seen the luncheon tables in Ch. Ch. - the Hall and pictures never looked more wonderful. I went to see them at 12.30 - 64 places - and all the Imperial old silver and

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gold vases, tankards, etc., on the tables - with chrysanthemums - oak colour, to harmonize with the wood, and two huge fires sputtering and snapping. I am sure they must have loved it. Dr. Cheever and Dr. Bremer came with their O.C., Sir Alan Perry, to lunch Sunday - they only arrived Saturday night and were so nice. I hope and pray all goes well in France. It is simply horrible - the weather over there - and I am terrified about the men being cold. I am providing them with sleeping socks to their knees. . . .Socks are the most needed of all things and khaki mufflers. The McGill men are having the devil's own time with wind and cold - they are being moved outside Boulogne and I hope will be comfortable. Revere as you know is going nearer the front - to No. ^{3 F.A.}~~39-A~~ as quartermaster. I hope he may be happier. The war is too muddy and worrying to write about.

Later. The men all came and have had really a wonderful day. I think they thoroughly appreciated it - arrived at 11 - left at 6.

It is now Revere's turn to tell how muddy the war really was, for

instead of going to No. ^{3 F.A.}~~39-A~~ as expected, and perhaps at the very moment when 'two huge wood fires were sputtering and snapping' in Woolsey's dining-hall at Oxford, he is writing the following letter to his aunt, Mrs. Chapin:

No. 3 Canadian General Hospital, B.E.F.
Dec. 3rd.

Dear Aunt Susie, Just a line to wish you a happy Christmas and to let you know my prospects of the same. I am still with No. 3 which nearly a month ago ceased to be a hospital and which has since become a turbid

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mud hole, rank with unrest and discontent. The canvas hospital proved, as everyone expected, a decided failure, and not only was our three months' hard work undone by the winds of a night but the ground from being an arid waste of grassless dust was changed in the course of a week to a sea of mud, which was and still is, black, putrid and unwholesome, to sit, sleep or stand in. So after a good deal of hesitation and and a still greater deal of correspondence it was brought to the notice of some red-hatted, brass-buttoned, elegant gentlemen that No. 3 Canadian Gen. Hospital was undergoing a process of gradual enlizement and would very likely disappear altogether. Orders came to evacuate all patients, which was done immediately, and to prepare to move at a moment's notice. A suitable building was found in Boulogne and it seemed evident that we were to make it our winter quarters. All this is now in the days long ago and the red-hatted authorities must have forgotten us. It would be an act of heroic kindness to remind them again of our existence and to point out that 30 officers, 250 men and 70 nurses have for five weeks sat in cold and draughty tents with the mud oozing through the floors and the rain dripping from the roof, without a thing to do but fight the wind and the rain and stoke the smoking stinking braziers. . . . I wish you could see us here. Some of the officers I think you must know. Bill and Campbell Howard of course, and Dr. Russell and Dr. Little whom you probably remember from Baltimore days. We are all assembled round an old oil can full of hot coak which pours volumes of dismal smoke through a ventilator in the roof of the tent. There are several comfortable chairs and three card-tables which Muz sent from England. There are also two plain tables covered with blankets, a

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letter-box, a notice-board and two pails. Over all, in my eyes at any rate a mist of impenetrable gloom seems to hang. In an adjacent tent are two long board tables with chairs on either side. In this we eat 3 times a day. Behind is a shed, built by the Engineers, with a stove and a sink. It makes a good kitchen and turns out daily at least one first-rate meal. We all sit round the oil can every day. Sometimes someone goes away for the day, sometimes someone writes a letter and usually two or three couples are playing cards with a pile of sous in front of them. The strange thing is that no one complains. I have explored the country pretty thoroughly and found a good deal of interest. There is little chance of talking French except on walks when one meets peasants on the road; even then they speak a strange dialect of their own. I think there is a good chance of No. 3 leading this same life for several weeks more. The Boulogne expedition seems very distant and I am very glad to be getting away and trying the excitement of proximity to our old friends the Germans. It is said that they have unheard-of means of dispelling gloom.

I hope you all have the same happy Christmas that we used to have at Canton and that you can forget the war for that one day at least. My best love to all whom I know in Canton. Your loving REVERE.

P.S. Do you not think that you could stow yourself, Susan, Margaret and the uncles on board the Peace Ship which your eminent compatriot is about to launch upon the sea of blood? At any rate give him my love and a split pea for the dove. (May it choke him!)

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Loathe the war as they did, evidently neither Revere nor his father were 'peace without victory' men. On December 10th the Regius writes, ~~to F. H. Garrison:~~

I have neglected you and many others, but it has been unavoidable. Hopeless mess! Secretary gone, butler and chauffeur too and I have a correspondence bureau to manage, but in such days it is a comfort to be busy. I am awfully in arrears with work. I am struggling with the early incunabula, a new edition [of the Text-book] and all sorts of interest in sick and wounded. . . ~~We are full of para-typhoids chiefly from the Dardanelles. We had a new Harvard unit here the other day. Such a nice set of boys. We had a scare about 3 weeks ago - fire in the dining-room. Another hour and my MSS and books in the room above would have gone.~~ Your book has done good missionary work and stimulated interest enormously. When do you issue a second edition? I have a few corrections. The country is in good form, and the army growing and improving every day; but the war is not half over. Anything but an inconclusive peace! We must either win or go under in which latter case, we shall hand on the struggle to you. Get your ships ready in any case. The Navy has saved us. Greetings to the Librarian.

~~And on the same day~~ to H. B. Jacobs:

. . . It is sure to be a long war. Finance may stop it and leave the issue undecided, which would be unfortunate. Either we or the U.S. has to smash Germany. If we go under she will be at your throats within a year.

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Ships, ships, ships! what would we do without the navy & it may be the navy that will decide the war. The difficulty is to turn a democracy into a fighting people. It is very slow work. Ld. Derby has apparently done the job without conscription. The recruiting has been wonderful, There will be an army of 4 million with 6 mos. Lack of proper organization is sadly felt. You cannot grow a big general staff in a few months any more than ^{you} can build a Krupp's in a year. On the whole the country has done wonderfully and if we could only shut up the politicians & editors & put the war into the hands of a few good men, she would do better still.

. . . Revere is well, but there is not enough to do at the McGill unit, so he is going to join a field ambulance and will be near Poperinghe. Poor laddie, he longs to be back at Ch. Ch. with his books. Oxford is empty - we have 20 men at Ch. Ch. instead of 280. The losses have been fearful and so many friends have lost boys . . . Extraordinary people, such self restraint - no murmur or discontent. Grace is working at high pressure - 120 women in a big laboratory. . . I am picking up a few treasures - nice XI Cent. MS of Platerius - one of the Practica of Bernard Gordinio. The Catalogue grows. . .

In his batch of Christmas letters to America, for good reason gotten off early in the month, he gives some details of what happened at the fire; as in the following to Mrs. Brewster:

. . . It was so good of you & R. B. to send that fat cheque [for the Belgians], which Grace acknowledged. People are wonderfully kind & send

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all sorts of things, - 95 barrels of apples! came last week/ for the Canadian wounded soldiers. Revere had leave for 5 days - looks so fit. He is joining the Field Ambulance as the Hospital work is too monotonous & he feels it rather a soft job. He will be at the front We shall have to take our worries with the others. Poor laddie! he loathes the whole business. We had a horrid scare the other night - fire in the dining-room Grace woke with the smell of smoke 3.30 a.m. We kept it in one room until the engines came. It was a narrow escape. . . No serious loss ~~except that nice Vernon plaque in bronze~~ ^{but} / another hour & the whole house would have gone. I suppose you are glad now to have had the fire at Avalon. When I opened the door & the black smoke puffed into my face the thought came "nothing that cannot be replaced", but then I rushed upstairs to get the MSS & incunabula. I enclose a photo. of the wreck taken next day. The country is at last awake. Recruits pouring in - munitions abundant - outlook good on the western front, very bad in the east - very good at sea, better in America! So let us be thankful. The English are awful pessimists I suppose it is the climate. . . Letters are very uncertain just now but this should reach Avalon in time to wish you all a very happy Xmas.

The year ended with one of his familiar broncho-pneumonic attacks a little more prolonged and serious than usual. He entered in his account-book opposite Dec. 26th - "Cold hanging about for two weeks, began in lar-

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ynx, then went to head; out on and off. Last few days bronchial and coughed a good deal at night just before going to sleep - no fever." This barred him from active participation in the Christmas gaieties, for the house as usual was full of young people on leave.' Indeed on the 30th he writes that he is 'still housed with influenza.' Nevertheless he can write cheerfully enough, as this to Mrs. Chapin on the 26th indicates:

Dearest Sue We have had a happy Xmas but have missed Issac so much. I hope Grace sends on some of his letters which are often very amusing. Grace is wonderful - such energy & industry. She is the life of that big Red + work-room; and she seems to have money galore for everything. You have been an angel to collect so much. Things are going well in the country, which at last recognizes the gravity & greatness of the task. So long as the Navy holds the seas Germany is in a tight place, no matter what she does on land - but an inconclusive peace would be a disaster, and mean a repetition of all these horrors in another ten years. . . . Fire has done much good - as usual, but what an escape for my books! Your loving W.

It was at about this time that the widespread system of espionage, one purpose of which was to blow up with bombs vessels carrying munitions

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of war to Europe, had been uncovered in the United States. Though the Austrian Ambassador had been recalled, the more clever German Ambassador remained and was engaged on the onehand in the plot to dislocate American industry, and on the other was letting loose ballons d'essai of peace, one expression of which was the amazing expedition of the "Oscar II" with its 'out of the trenches by Christmas' slogan.

Peace would be welcome in England, but not 'at any price.'

The disconcerting news of the failure at Gallipoli alone, coupled with an attack of bronchopneumonia following influenza, should have been enough to depress ordinary mortals. Nevertheless Osler can write the last day of the year, "The country is going strong. Hit any man on the head for me who says 'peace'!"