

Cushing's "Life Of Osler" Review

An Adequate Picture Of A Remarkable Personality In Field Of Medicine

THE LIFE OF SIR WILLIAM OSLER. By Harvey Cushing. 2 vols. Oxford (Clarendon Press), 1925.

REVIEWED BY LEWELLYS F. BARKER.

EAGERLY looked for by a host of people in at least three countries, in no place could the publication of Dr. Harvey Cushing's *Life of Sir William Osler* have been more impatiently awaited than in Baltimore, where the subject of this biography spent the prime of his life (between the ages of 39 and 55), where he did his greatest work both for the profession and for the public, and where in proximity to him the biographer also lived during a large part of the same period. In the life and work of the older man Baltimoreans had and continue to have a deep and affectionate interest; they are proud that they possessed him for a generation as a fellow-citizen; and they are grateful for the profound services he rendered to society at large and for the prestige that he brought to the Johns Hopkins Hospital and Medical School, to the city in which he lived and to the State and Nation to which they belong. That, in the younger man, another former citizen, the world now recognizes not only an able surgeon but a brilliant writer of biography is further reason for especial local congratulation. Dr. Osler, admired and loved by everyone who knew him, had lived so true, so full and notable a life that great responsibilities fell upon his biographer. Dr. Cushing must have felt these responsibilities keenly and, as those who read these volumes will quickly discern, he has had the great good fortune, through nature, training and association, to possess the capacity adequately to fulfill them.

No wonder, with such a biography available, that lights are burning late in many Baltimore homes. Just as the small hours of the nights of the intellectually destitute are said to be encroached upon by the cross-word puzzle, so those of many of the intellectually avid are to their profit just now being beguiled by the perusal of these two large volumes that Cushing has penned. The reader should be warned that, once entered upon, the volumes cannot easily be laid down; he who would secure his regular hours of sleep will do best to postpone the reading of this biography until the time of his summer vacation.

THE biography consists of three parts, corresponding to (I) the Canadian period, 1849-1884; (II) the period of residence in the United States, 1884-1905, and (III) the Oxford period, (1905-1919). Parts I and II make up the first volume, of which no less than 375 pages are given over to the Baltimore period; the second volume deals with the life at Oxford; but since throughout the whole of Dr. Osler's later life he maintained intimate relations with his Canadian and American friends, the second volume is fully as interesting and informative to Baltimoreans as is the first.

Dr. Cushing, despite his adoption of the ordinary biographical form of chronological narration (the telling of the story of the life year by year from birth to death), has evidently striven hard to avoid the well-known pitfalls and dangers that are attendant upon this form—namely, excessive length, superfluous detail of incident and background, and irrelevancy. His main effort has been to bring Osler "into proper alignment with that most remarkable period in the annals of medicine through which he lived and of

"latchkeyers" who had entrance at will to Dr. Osler's house.

Sometime, later on, a final portrait of Sir William may be painted "when the colors, lights and shadows come in time to be added" to what the biographer modestly calls the "outline" now given. Some of us hope that, perhaps, Dr. Cushing himself may subsequently attempt this final portrait also, making use then not of the chronological method but of the psychographic form of biography that has been so well exemplified in the lives written by Lytton Strachey, of London, and by Gamaliel Bradford, of Boston. Dr. Cushing's present achievement has made sufficiently clear to us that from now on he owes it to the public to yield not only to what he might humorously call his "itch to cut" but also to his "itch to write"!

ACHIEVEMENTS like those of Dr. Osler could scarcely have been possible without a fortunate physical and psychical inheritance, a favorable environment in early life, and a chain of circumstances that gave special opportunities for the realization of his potentialities. Born in 1849 in a parsonage near the edge of the wilderness at Bond Head, in Upper Canada (now Ontario), of blended Anglo-Saxon and Celtic ancestry, he was the youngest son in a family of nine, several of whom were to attain to unusual distinction in their respective careers. At 16 he came, first, under the influence of a nature-loving clergyman, the Rev. W. A. Johnson of Trinity College School at Weston, who showed him "with the microscope the marvels in a drop of dirty pond water, and who on Saturday excursions up the river could talk of Trilobites and the Orthoceratites and explain the formation of the earth's crust," and, secondly, he fell under the spell of Dr. James Bovell, the medical director of the school, who was also an enthusiastic naturalist-physician, a man of fine spirit and of wide interests, who loved to converse, as Dr. Osler once said,

On Providence, Foreknowledge, Will and Fate.
Fixed Fate, Freewill, Foreknowledge absolute.

Bovell, later on, deserted medicine for the church; when he left Canada the young Osler felt that he "had lost a father and a friend." Ever after it was his habit when in reverie to scribble the name of James Bovell upon pad or paper before him. When the youth had become the mature Dr. Osler he often referred to the advantages of men who "fight with their backs to the North"; and he repeatedly said that to his three teachers—Father Johnson and Dr. James Bovell of Ontario and Dr. Robert Palmer Howard of Montreal—he owed his "success in life—if success means getting what you want and being satisfied with it." His reverence for these three men and his gratitude to them crops out in page after page of Cushing's biography.

OSLER'S undergraduate medical training was obtained partly at the Toronto Medical School, partly at McGill University in Montreal. After graduation he spent two years in study in Europe (1872-4), especially in Edinburgh, London and Vienna. On his return to Canada he engaged for a brief period in private practice (recording as his first fee, "speck in cornea, 50c."), but he was soon offered a lectureship in physiology at McGill, and later was appointed full professor there. He was also given facilities for clinical work and for the making of post-mortem examinations through which he quickly attracted the interests of the better students, while at the same time he perfected his own technique in clinical medicine and pathology. In the course

influence extended more widely and to better purposes than that of almost anyone I have ever known.

IN 1889 Dr. Osler was called to Baltimore to take charge of a "medical unit" and to serve as Physician-in-Chief of the Johns Hopkins Hospital. He had been the choice of Dr. Welch for the position for many years before it was possible to invite him to come. "The appointment," his biographer, reports, "created a great stir, and, widely heralded, was accorded universal approbation, for his popularity was already widespread." He proceeded at once to look for able young men to act as his assistants, as shown by a note to his friend, Dr. Ogden:

I go to B. in May. We are getting the Hosp. in order. If you know of any A. A. 1. copper-bottomed young graduate in the West who could serve for a year as Interne I should like one. . . . We should need 2-3 resident graduates—ultimately 10-20, and they are to be selected from the country at large.

Thus began his Baltimore career—a period of sixteen years of most intense activity as organizer, teacher, practitioner, investigator, writer, and leader in reforms of public health and of medical education.

As an organizer of his department at the Johns Hopkins Hospital he made many departures from the system in vogue in other places, but he quickly gained the approval of the superintendent of the hospital, Dr. Henry M. Hurd, and of his colleagues, Professors Welch, Halsted and Kelly. He had no trouble in drawing to him the most promising young men in the profession to aid him in his new field of work. He set up a graded resident staff, which next to his introduction of the medical students to the work of the wards was his best innovation in hospital organization. During his sixteen years of control he had only five first assistants: Dr. H. A. Laflaur, who became Professor of Medicine at McGill; Dr. William S. Thayer, who became Professor of Medicine at Johns Hopkins; Dr. Thomas B. Futcher, who became Associate Professor at Johns Hopkins (and who married the daughter of one of his revered teachers, Dr. R. P. Howard); Dr. Thomas McCrae, who became Professor of Medicine at Jefferson College, Philadelphia, (and who married one of his nieces), and Dr. Rufus Cole, who became Director of the Hospital of the Rockefeller Institute. Each of these men had served as junior and senior resident assistants in the hospital over a period of years. Most of the men who were internes on his staff subsequently had successful careers; among them were a large number of the physicians and surgeons now successfully engaged in teaching and practice in Baltimore. Every one of them looks back with gratitude and pride to the months or years spent in his service. He always sought opportunity to praise good work done by a young man; thus "Hamman seems an A-1 fellow"; "I do hope McCrae will stay—he is very strong as a teacher and full of sense"; "Futcher is a saint"; "Cole is a fine fellow"; "Boggs, who has the bacteriology, is A-1."

As a teacher, he fought for the principle that the student can best learn the practical art of medicine at the bedside, for he regarded as the Alpha and Omega of clinical teaching the practice insisted upon years earlier by Latham, of London—namely, "that the clinical teacher should take the students along with him into the hospital wards where he would be their



THE M

This bronze memorial plaque for the late Sir William Osler, presented to the Johns Hopkins Historical Club by

detested the "Gehazis who serve," though he believed that exceptions, not the rule, in the profession. In his youth, he doubted whether a practitioner ethically made more than a living, and though the circle of his later career revealed the fallacy of that view, he always felt that hospital physicians general practitioners were in rather than excessively reward himself, as his income grew adopted the habit of "sanctifying" by the gift of a rare book to library, by helping some young scientist to continue his studies, by assisting lame various types over stiles, or contributions to the Medical Faculty. The treasurer of Dr. Thomas A. Ashby, once "I never saw a man who enjoyed as much as you do, and I prize one reason why you are happy."

NO man was ever more beloved by his patients. Only those to whom he had been ministrant could perhaps understand the depth of devotion he inspired. One of them, Dr. Fielding Reid, of this city, in his own experience, has the words "In a room full of discordant voices he entered and saw only his patient's greatest need, instantly the atmosphere was with kindly vitality, everyone's situation was under control, were attention. . . . Sublimely direct in character, his liant mind and soaring spirit challenged, because, under the gay man of the world saint. It is when a man touches people's lives that you know he brings life or death. Where that swift spirit has not known, but I know that, cared for on earth he brought will look back and remember thank God and take courage.

In this connection it is that the medical artist, M. once depicted Dr. Osler in as "The Saint-Johns Hospital," and a reviewer of Cushing's biography in the *Literary Supplement* of the *London Times* is doubtless when he remarks: "Osler was



birth to death), has evidently striven hard to avoid the well-known pitfalls and dangers that are attendant upon this form—namely, excessive length, superfluous detail of incident and background, and irrelevancy. His main effort has been to bring Osler "into proper alignment with that most remarkable period in the annals of medicine through which he lived and of which he was part." He admits that the records he has compiled are but *mémoires pour servir*, but he has tried to let the story of Osler's life "so far as possible tell itself through what he puts on paper." He makes no attempt precisely to appraise the professional accomplishments of the man of whom he writes, but assumes that "his rare personality, spirit and character stand out in his recorded letters, brief though they are."

With the wealth of material at disposal about Dr. Osler, the magnitude of his literary product, the enormous number of letters that have been preserved, the abundant personal reminiscences supplied by Osler's friends and acquaintances, his biographer must have been faced with a very difficult task of selection, of rejection, of compression, of arrangement, and of emphasis. Facts about Osler, letters from Osler, addresses by Osler, books by Osler—if all were collected and published—would make twenty volumes or more of the size of the two now published. They would, of course, not constitute a biography, but only some of the materials for one. The value of any biography depends not alone upon the life to be described, but much also upon what the biographer sees in that life, his analysis of it, his reflection upon it, his critical discrimination, his soundness of judgment, and above all his literary style (the form and quality of his own writing; the way he combines his materials, transmutes them, invests them with beauty and charm by virtue of his own powers as artist). Within the limits Dr. Cushing has set for himself it seems to the reviewer that his performance in the biography before us is excellent; to those who knew Sir William it will immediately be regarded as giving as adequate a picture of a remarkable personality as could well have been expected, and to subsequent generations it is likely to make a continuing appeal.

THE bookmaking and the proofreading—to mention smaller matters—are also satisfactory. It is seldom that one reads through two large volumes without being jarred by more errors and misprints than one finds in those under review. An occasional slip is, it is true, discoverable, such as the split infinitive on page 274, the capitalization of a German adjective on page 429 and the place of graduation of Dr. Ramsay on page 369; but there is no slovenliness anywhere—it is accuracy and scrupulous care in editing that everywhere impresses the reader of these well-done tomes. A striking feature is the omission of any reference in text or index to the biographer himself by name; those "in the know" can recognize many letters that were addressed to him by Dr. Osler and will recall that he was one of the group of

but he was soon offered a lectureship in physiology at McGill, and later was appointed full professor there. He was also given facilities for clinical work and for the making of post-mortem examinations through which he quickly attracted the interests of the better students, while at the same time he perfected his own technique in clinical medicine and pathology. In the course of his work in the smallpox epidemic in Montreal he contracted the disease, and ever afterwards took an especial interest in its prevention. From time to time he made further studies in Europe, widening his acquaintance with distinguished teachers and investigators, and enlarging his medical knowledge, so that gradually he grew in power both as a teacher and as an investigator.

In 1884, at the age of 35, he was called to Philadelphia as professor of clinical medicine in the University of Pennsylvania. His own account of what decided this appointment illustrates his incorrigible habit of humorous playfulness; he asserted that, as a test of his breeding, Dr. Weir Mitchell gave him cherry pie to eat and watched how he got rid of the stones; but he disposed of them genteelly in his spoon—and got the chair!

FROM his earliest school days on he was full of pranks and of practical jokes, and Dr. Cushing's account of some of these makes interesting reading. At times he would allow a madcap impulse to prankishness to carry him rather far, and, on more than one occasion he narrowly escaped getting himself and friends into difficulty. Sir James Barrie called the unruly half of himself "McConnachie"; and Dr. Osler invented "Egerton Yorick Davis of Caughnawauqua, P. Q." as his "McConnachie," deceiving medical editors by sending them articles in which the most marvelous (but fictitious) cases were reported by E. Y. Davis, registering at hotels under this assumed name, and sometimes escaping from bores who tried to inflict themselves upon the Dr. Osler of whom they had heard by the abrupt fiction: "You've mistaken your man; my name is Davis—E. Y. Davis of Caughnawauqua."

In Philadelphia he worked at the University Hospital, the Infirmary for Nervous Diseases and Blockley for six years (1884-1889), achieved there an enviable success as a teacher and clinical investigator, developed himself further as a writer (his "inkpot career"), cemented many warm friendships, and by virtue of his own precept and example "stimulated his students to observe, record and publish." He possessed the wonderful power, given to but a few, of inciting those about him to their best efforts; as his friend Sir Clifford Allbutt once remarked, he was an "in-seminator of other minds." Dr. W. W. Keen of Philadelphia refers to his Philadelphia period thus:

Wherever he went the wheels began to go "round," things began to be done, and all for the good of the profession and of the community. The dry bones as in Ezekiel's Vision gathered themselves together and became imbued with active life. The diligent were encouraged to become more diligent, the slothful were shamed into activity. He was a fount of inspiration. His personal



OSLER, AGED 63

From a snapshot taken in the Hopkins garden on the occasion of his visit to Baltimore in 1913.

guide, though it was to be by their own eyes, their own ears, their own minds and their own hearts that they must observe and learn and profit. As one of his best and most devoted students, Dr. Thomas R. Brown, has written of him: "He made each student feel that he also was but a student of health and disease, of men and morals, and yet such a student as to fire our minds, our souls and our bodies to renewed efforts so that we might, in some measure at least, prove worthy of this fraternity."

Dr. Osler prized companionship with young men, which he sometimes referred to as "the secret of Hermippus." He used to say that the clinical physician as he grows older "must walk with the 'boys,' else he is lost, irrevocably lost"; in order to "keep his mind receptive, plastic and impressionable, he must travel with the men who are doing the work of the world, the men between the ages of 25 and 40." And he further advised every medical man, whether teacher or practitioner, to visit other medical centers at intervals, to go away for what he called "a quinquennial brain-dusting"; for he believed in Plato's principle that "education is a lifelong process," in which the student can only make a beginning during his college course.

AS a practitioner, he confined his work to the care of patients in the hospital and to consultation work. He tried hard to limit the amount of the latter, but as his reputation grew it became a serious burden, especially as he had become the "doctor's doctor" and his aid was sought from all sides and by people who came long distances to secure his opinion. His professional fees were moderate and were never a matter of primary interest with him, for he

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In this connection it is that the medical artist, Macdonald, once depicted Dr. Osler in as "The Saint-Johns Hospital," and a reviewer of Cushing in the *Literary Supplement* of the *London Times* is doubtful when he remarks: "Osler was in life and a saint, and the must make a man memorable his other qualities may be."

AS an investigator, Dr. Osler's contributions were those of a clinical observer, rather than of a laboratory experimenter. His observational and statistical studies of phoid fever, of malaria, of p and of tuberculosis are of his. His researches on diseases of and blood vessels, of the bile passages, and of certain of the nervous system led to a recording of original observations of importance. In 1890 he found in an abscess of the liver in of Dr. Julius Friedenwald's been operated upon by Dr. T. first confirmation in America of work of Kartulis in Egypt. rapher refers to the principle that intrigued him, but does not tempt any exact estimate of final discoveries. Indeed, such a mate would be very difficult, painstaking analysis of all original and pathological papers, published records of others of the same subjects—a worth for a Ph. D. thesis some time in the future. In the final analysis should be paid to the results of his incitation of other in original investigative work; he in suggestions of pieces of research might profitably be undertaken happy in his choice of the whom he made such suggestions this respect acting as a "pilot" of medical inquiry.

AS a writer, he probably all his clinical contemporaries the number and in the literary scientific quality of his production. His productivity was veritable, and one can but wonder actually found the time to produce so much, but so much that on paper. It is true that his life most systematically, ruthlessly deleted factors that disturbing to his major interest he formed the habit of ever of the "flighty purpose" by made deed go with it," and that, in Carlyle, he early decided not with "what lies dimly in the but to do what lies closely despite all these qualities, it is to understand how he accomplished much in the way of literary work, his able secretary, Miss will some time enlighten us, fully referred to "Osler. (Hu Co.)" as the source of his writing.

Every year of his Philadelphia Baltimore periods there appear his pen several major and many articles on medical topics; in 1887, according to Dr. Cushing, biography contains no less than

Reviewed



THE MACKENZIE

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detested, the "Gehazis who serve for shekels," though he believed that they are exceptions, not the rule, in the medical profession. In his youth he almost doubted whether a practitioner could ethically make more than a very small income, and though the circumstances of his later career revealed to him the fallacy of that view, he always had the feeling that hospital physicians and general practitioners were insufficiently rather than excessively rewarded. He himself, as his income grew larger, adopted the habit of "sanctifying a fee," by the gift of a rare book to a medical library, by helping some struggling young scientist to continue in graduate studies, by assisting lame dogs of various types over stiles, or by contributions to the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty. The treasurer of the latter, Dr. Thomas A. Ashby, once wrote him: "I never saw a man who enjoyed giving as much as you do, and I presume that is one reason why you are always happy."

NO man was ever more beloved by his patients. Only those to whom he had been ministrant could perhaps fully understand the depth of devotion that he inspired. One of them, Mrs. Harry Fielding Reid, of this city, recalling her own experience, has thus written: "In a room full of discordant elements, he entered and saw only his patient and only his patient's greatest need, and instantly the atmosphere was charged with kindly vitality, everyone felt the situation was under control, and all were attention." Subtle in temperament, direct in character, the brilliant mind and soaring spirit were unchallenged, because, under the surface of the gay man of the world, lived the saint. It is when a man touches other people's lives that you know whether he brings life or death or nothing. Where that swift spirit has gone I do not know, but I know that to those he cared for on earth he brought life. They will look back and remember, and will thank God and take courage."

In this connection it is interesting that the medical artist, Max Broedel, once depicted Dr. Osler in a cartoon as "The Saint-Johns Hopkins Hospital," and a reviewer of Cushing's biography in the *Literary Supplement* of the *London Times* is doubtless right when he remarks: "Osler was an artist

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AS an investigator, Dr. Osler's contributions were those of an exact clinical observer, rather than of a laboratory experimenter. His observational and statistical studies of typhoid fever, of malaria, of pneumonia, and of tuberculosis are of high value. His researches on diseases of the heart and blood vessels, of the blood, of the bile passages, and of certain diseases of the nervous system led to the recording of original observations of importance. In 1890 he found amœbas in an abscess of the liver in a patient of Dr. Julius Friedenwald's who had been operated upon by Dr. Tiffany, the first confirmation in America of the work of Kartulis in Egypt. His biographer refers to the principal studies that intrigued him, but does not attempt any exact estimate of his original discoveries. Indeed, such an estimate would be very difficult without a painstaking analysis of all of his clinical and pathological papers and of the published records of others dealing with the same subjects—a worthy subject for a Ph. D. thesis some time in the future. In the final analysis attention should be paid to the results that followed his incitation of others to original investigative work; he was lavish in suggestions of pieces of research that might profitably be undertaken, and happy in his choice of the men to whom he made such suggestions—in this respect acting as a "potent ferment" of medical inquiry.

AS a writer, he probably surpassed all his clinical contemporaries in the number and in the literary and scientific quality of his publications. His productivity was veritably prodigious, and one can but wonder how he actually found the time to put not only so much, but so much that was good, on paper. It is true that he planned his life most systematically, that he ruthlessly deleted factors that could be disturbing to his major interests, that he formed the habit of ever overtaking the "flighty purpose" by making "the deed go with it," and that, influenced by Carlyle, he early decided not to bother with "what lies dimly in the distance but to do what lies closely at hand"; despite all these qualities, it is difficult to understand how he accomplished so much in the way of literary work. Perhaps, his able secretary, Miss Humpton will some time enlighten us, for he playfully referred to "Osler, (Humpton) & Co." as the source of his writings.

Every year of his Philadelphia and Baltimore periods there appeared from his pen several major and many minor articles on medical topics; in the year 1887, according to Dr. Cushing, his bibliography contains no less than eight

RE, SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 1925.

By Dr. Barker



MEDALLION

of former associates and friends. It was modeled by Dr. R. Tait Mackenzie, of Philadelphia.

titles (though this number includes his remarks made in discussion of the papers of others at the medical societies that he attended). His famous textbook, *The Principles and Practice of Medicine*, appeared in 1892 and was revised every three years afterward during his lifetime; it was done throughout with such a sureness of touch and with its facts expressed in such readable form that it immediately superseded all other textbooks of general medicine and still continues to hold the field." The work has been translated into French, German, Spanish and Chinese, and has had and still has an enormous sale. Entirely unknown to Dr. Osler until years later, it was the reading of this textbook by a layman, Mr. F. T. Gates, the confidential adviser of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, that led to the interest of the latter in the prevention and cure of disease and was really responsible for his large gifts to the Johns Hopkins Hospital, to the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research and to the International Health Board.

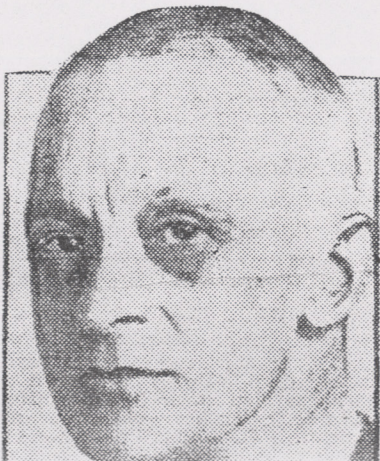
R. OSLER'S contributions to several systems of medicine, including the ten-volume "System," edited by himself and Dr. McCrae, involved a deal of editing. Furthermore, no one was in greater demand than he for the making

of medical licensure are described by Dr. Cushing in the biography.

SPACE will not permit of more than mention of the hospitality shown by Dr. Osler and his greatly admired wife at their home at 1 West Franklin street. A happy inspiration of the biographer has led him to include a number of Lady Osler's letters, the liveliness and vivacity of which not only reveal much of her own lovable personality but also throw unexpected sidelights upon the character and habits of her husband. Dr. Cushing gives a good account, too, of the significant influence of Dr. Osler on the development of the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland and its library. No wonder that when the call to the Regius Professorship at Oxford came, and was accepted, there was deep regret in Baltimore at his departure, only slightly mitigated by the honor that was thus conferred upon him. A good idea of his physical appearance at this time is given by the medallion by Vernon of Paris, which Dr. H. B. Jacobs had made of him in the summer of 1905.

At Oxford Dr. Osler showed that the opportunities of a Regius Professorship are as great as are the qualities of its incumbent. He continued, when transplanted, to campaign for reforms in public health and in medical education. He soon became as sought after for occasional addresses there as when here. Honors came to him from many sources. The Ashmolean Society, the Bibliographical Society and the Classical Association all elected him as president. He was made a baronet by King George, much to the embarrassment of his democratic simplicity though without making any difference in his internal sensations, he said in a letter to Miss Noyes; and he jokingly wrote to his sister that he owed the honor to his wife—"it was her regal appearance that settled George R."

There is no evidence that this great influx of honors was disturbing to his equanimity. The hospitality of Sir William and Lady Osler at the "Open Arms" (13 Norham Gardens) was indistinguishable from that of the "chief"



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It was in his address entitled *The Fixed Period* that Dr. Osler referred to Anthony Trollope's novel of the same name, in which the chloroforming of men over 60 was suggested. The storm that followed was comparable to that which greeted Dewey when it was announced that he had deeded to his wife the house given to him by the people. Osler had earlier written of the "Deilah of the Press"; but his surprise must have been as great as Dewey's when, like the latter, he became the victim of yellow journalism. It hurt him, for the old had in reality no greater friend; but he bore the blow patiently, amused himself in the University Club in New York to escape the reporters, and wrote to his friends that he was, like Plato, "hiding under a wall, waiting for the storm to pass." In all his writings Osler reveals his love of the classics, both ancient and modern. He wove into his addresses many literary allusions, and he quoted frequently his favorite authors, especially Plato and Sir Thomas Browne, for the *Dialogues* of the former and the *Religio Medici* of the latter were the most read volumes of his own "bedside library."

AS a leader in the reform of public health, his biographer asserts, Dr. Osler performed "his greatest professional service." He and his colleague, Dr. Welch, cooperated with the health officers of this city and state in waging unceasing war against typhoid fever, tuberculosis, and the conditions responsible for a high infant mortality. It was largely through these efforts to secure a sewerage system, hospitals for infectious diseases, and a purer water, milk and food supply that the incidence of these maladies has in our time been so greatly diminished. In 1900 the wards of the Johns Hopkins Hospital were so crowded with acutely ill typhoid patients that sufferers from other maladies had to be temporarily excluded; in recent years his successor, Professor Longcope, at the same hospital, and Professor Pincoffs, at the University of Maryland Hospital, have had difficulty in admitting a sufficient number of cases to permit of satisfactory instruction of medical students in the diagnosis and treatment of typhoid fever!

In the campaign against the "white plague" (tuberculosis), too, Dr. Osler fought vigorously for improvement of living conditions among the poor, and for the provision of state and municipal sanatoria for the treatment of the disease. Many may still remember the meeting in McCoy Hall (packed to the doors) in 1902, when addressing his "long-suffering, patient, inert fellow-citizens" he spoke of the 10,000 consumptives living among them, asked what was being done for them, and, shaking his finger in the Mayor's face, declared: "We are doing, Mr. Mayor and fellow-citizens, not one solitary thing that a modern civilized community should do." Cushing says this vigorous indictment "apparently turned the trick" for the Legislature then created a Tuberculosis Commission and State and National Associations for the study and prevention of tuberculosis soon followed. Campaigns of similar vigor for the betterment of medical education and



DR. HARVEY CUSHING

and Mrs. Osler in former days at 1 West Franklin street. A British commentator referring to the honors poured at Osler's feet says:

It would be a mean and low estimate of the man that would lay emphasis on these. No man ever bore honors more lightly. Success is the surest test of a man's soul, and Osler in his declining years remained eager of mind, humble of soul, gay of courage, universally sympathetic—yet always touched with an essential melancholy.

THE melancholy (underneath the gaiety) to which this writer refers was well known to exist by those who knew Dr. Osler intimately: his frequent statement "I whistle that I may not weep" had its basis in a deep-seated constitutional disposition. But despite this innate tendency, he exhibited courage and cheerfulness in the most trying situations. The great war almost broke his heart; the tragic death of his son, Revere, did break it. Throughout the letters cited the place of Revere in his affections increases to a climax. Dr. Osler was never the same man after his son's death; though he carried on, he was shattered, and he fell an easy prey to the broncho-pneumonia he contracted at the end of 1919. The great sorrow that had come to him near the end of his life was a striking illustration of the old adage that was often on his lips, "Call no man happy until he is dead." But even by this greatest of sorrows and by the suffering of his terminal illness he was not embittered. Writing toward the end to an old friend (Mrs. Brewster) he said: "The confounded thing [his illness] drags on in an unpleasant way—and in one's seventy-first year the harbor is not far off. And such a happy voyage, and such dear companions all the way! And the future does not worry."

CLAIMS 72-YEAR-OLD HAS SLEPT 23 YEARS

Dr. Hoeffert, Of Vienna, Leaves 14 Months Unaccounted For In Life Computation.

Bucharest, May 14 (By Mail).—"What do you do with the other fourteen months of your life?" is a question which a local newspaper has proposed to its readers, offering a prize for the best answers.

The novel contest follows a study by Prof. Victor Hoeffert, of Vienna, who contends that when a man is 72 years old his daily activities have consumed his time as follows: Sleeping, twenty-three years and four months; working, nineteen years and eight months; amusements, nine years and eight months; eating, six years and two months; traveling, six years; sick, four years; shaving or curling mustache, two years.

As the tabulation leaves fourteen months unaccounted for, the local newspaper is continuing the investigation with somewhat bizarre results.

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