

Among all those whose
The Beloved lot it has been to
Physician cheer, console and
comfort suffering

humanity, scarcely one has reaped a richer harvest of affectionate gratitude than William Osler. To know him was to love him. From his early days of poverty in Upper Canada until his death, full of years and honours, as Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford, his whole life is a memorial of the good which one single individual can contrive for his fellow men. No dramatic discovery fell to his lot; it was not given him to achieve sudden fame by the elaboration of a new serum or by the cure of some hopeless disease. He was first and foremost a practising physician, whose spiritual home was the hospital. Of the changes which he introduced into hospital practice; of the fruit of his insistence upon close touch between the hospital and the laboratory, members of his own profession are best qualified to speak. To the general public, he was known primarily as the leader of campaigns against tuberculosis; as the man to whom above all others upon earth was due the victory over typhoid. But to all who were privileged to come into contact with him, it was Osler the Man who primarily appealed. Uniting into one unique character the impishness of a child, the acuteness of the trained scientist, the recondite learning of the bibliophile, his most prominent characteristics were unconquerable gaiety, a tender heart, and a profound love for his fellow man. Deservedly was his modest house in Norham Gardens known to all and

sundry as "The Open Arms." No man of his time had so many friends. Indeed, he had in supreme degree the genius for friendship. It was frequently remarked that he was always of the same age as the man to whom he was talking.

In so far as it can be given to anyone in public life to have no enemies, William Osler had none. As has been well said, he advanced the science of medicine, he enriched literature and the humanities; yet individually he had a greater power. He became the friend of all he met—he knew the workings of the human heart metaphorically as well as physically. He joyed with the joys and wept with the sorrows of the humblest of those who were proud to be his pupils. He stooped to lift them up to the place of his royal friendship, and the magic touchstone of his generous personality helped many a desponder in the rugged paths of life. He achieved many honours and many dignities; but the proudest of all was his unwritten title, "The Young Man's Friend". For those who knew a little of Osler, the appearance of his Life in two bulky volumes, totalling some thirteen hundred pages (Sir William Osler, by Harvey Cushing, Oxford University Press 37/6) may be somewhat of a surprise. "Osler? Osler? Distinguished doctor, wasn't he? Why should anyone bother to write his Life at such length?" The answer to this question lies within the covers. A life such as this is an inspiration, not merely to the members of Osler's great profession, but to all who are inclined to doubt the efficacy of individual effort in this tangled world of ours. Osler's main business, in Carlyle's words, was not to see what lay dimly at a distance, but to do what lay clearly at hand. His courage, his cheerfulness, his achievements, constitute a record which no man can peruse without returning to the business of living with a better heart and a confirmed spirit.