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A Famous Physician THE LIFE OF SIR WILLIAM OSLER. By Harvey Cushing. Two volumes. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

William Osler was born on July 12, 1849, at Bond Head, a village in the woods between Toronto and Pelee Island. His father Rev. Andrew Featherstone-Lake Osler, was a clergyman of the Church of England, who had come out from Cornwall, to take up the duties of forwarding the interests of religion in a new country thinly populated with pioneers, and poor. His bride, whom he had married just before sailing, was Ellen Free Pickton. They accepted all the hardships of their situation, and were blessed with a family that gave to the public life of Canada more men of outstanding ability and character than any other in its story. The most distinguished of these was William, whose attainments in the science of medicine won him a reputation throughout the English-speaking world, and beyond it. In 1857 Rev. Mr. Osler was transferred to Dundas, then an ambitious and growing place, which hoped to become a leading centre in Canada west. Here the Osler boys attended the local grammar school, from which William was dismissed because of some prank which offended the master. He then became a pupil at a boarding school at Barrie, conducted by Rev. W. F. Chockley, a noted master of the day. Here he won a reputation as an athlete. This repute he added to during his terms at a school at Weston, founded by Rev. W. A. Johnson, a capable man, who had great influence over the boys, and who did not think that education could be measured by the number of facts which could be drilled into the pupils, but in the ideas with which they could be imbued. He was a lover of nature; everything interested him. He was accustomed to read to his pupils who lived with his family, and through him William Osler became acquainted with Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici*, a book which he valued to the end. Other fine books made their impression upon his mind, and the breadth of his literary knowledge is time and again illustrated in the letters he wrote in

kept up, and the training made him a keen observer. After he had given up the idea of entering the ministry and become a student at the Toronto Medical School he detected the presence of the trichina "worm" in its "capsule," while others who were examining a case had seen only "little specks in the muscles." In 1870 Osler came to McGill. Montreal then had the reputation of being the best medical school in Canada, the students having a degree of freedom in the wards of the hospitals not permitted at Toronto. Scotchmen in Montreal, who had much to do in starting hospitals as well as colleges, had followed the traditions of Edinburgh, while in other cities those of the great London hospitals were adhered to. At McGill Osler became a friend of Dr. R. Palmer Howard, whom he refers to in later years as a man with whom the study and teaching of medicine were an absorbing passion which nothing could quench. Other members of the teaching staff were Dr. William Wright, who later entered the ministry; Dr. Robert Craik, who some years later became dean of the reconstructed faculty, and later, Dr. Frances Shipherd, who revolutionized some methods; Dr. Duncan MacCallum; Dr. George W. Campbell, professor of surgery; Dr. George E. Fenwick, "A bold operator of pre-Listerian type," was chief of the department at the Montreal General Hospital, and his house surgeons were Drs. George Ross and Thomas G. Roddick, who later brought from Edinburgh "the Lister ritual," and helped to revolutionize surgery in Canada. In 1872 the list of students passing the final examinations included the name of William Osler, who was awarded a special prize for a thesis, "which was greatly distinguished for originality and research." The three teachers to whom the new doctor ascribed his success were W. A. Johnson, of Weston, a clergyman-teacher, whose ritualism made Bishop

Strachan, afraid of him; Dr. James Bovell, of Toronto, who gave away to poor patients the fees he collected from others; and Dr. R. Palmer Howard, of Montreal. In later life Dr. Osler had in his home portraits of Johnson, Bovell and Howard, along with those of Lina-aere, Harvey and Sydenham, whom he ranked among the greatest of medical teachers of England.

After finishing his term as a student, Dr. Osler was enabled to spend two years in Europe, widening his studies, extending his reading and gathering knowledge. In London he "walked" the hospitals. A paper he read before the Royal Microscopical Society on the action of certain reagents on the blood corpuscles attracted notice. Continuing his studies, the results were presented before the Royal Society by Dr. Sanderson, and were spoken of by Dr. Howard in his opening lecture at McGill as telling of a discovery of great interest. He visited Berlin and Vienna, in which latter city he spent five months, working hard, attending lectures and studying diseases, his aim being to get the broadest possible grounding in general medicine and the specialties. Returning to London, he made the acquaintance of many men foremost in science in English life—Charles Darwin, who spoke pleasantly of Principal Dawson, Dr. Sharpey, Kolliker, Thompson, Doorn and others. Back in Canada, he took over for a time the work of a local practitioner at Dundas. His first fee was entered in his notebook as "Speck in corner—50c." He served for a month as locum tenens for Dr. Charles O'Reilly, a McGill man, who was resident physician at the City Hospital, Hamilton, his remuneration being \$25. Soon he received from Dr. Howard a letter which intimated that the medical faculty of McGill had agreed to recommend him for a lectureship upon the institutes of medicine. The fees of the students, Dr. Howard thought, would at least meet his expenses for board, clothes, etc., and his position in the college would be of advantage to him in establishing a practice. Dr. Osler was not a rich man's son; he owed his term in Europe to the generosity of his brother Edmund, and had to depend on his own exertions for his living. He opened an office at 20 Radegonde street. In the items of expense preserved in an old book were \$8 for a ton of coal, \$12.25 for a bookcase, a desk and chair, \$3 for subscription to the *Churchman* and \$20 for books from Dawson's. This was in 1874. McGill's medical school was entering on a new era. Beside Osler, the appointments made at the time included George Ross, Roddick, Shepherd and Gardener. These were young men, and, with older professors like Campbell, Howard and Craik, they raised the reputation of the university. The equipment was not as extensive as was desirable, and Osler himself spent money in adding to it. He became personally responsible for a number of microscopes and later paid for them with his remuneration for work in caring for smallpox patients at the Montreal General Hospital, where he suffered from an attack of the disease. His account book for 1876 shows his income to have been \$1,178. He lived in a room for which he paid \$10 a month, paying \$20 for his meals, with an occasional special feast at the Terrapin. His lectureship became a professorship.

He was appointed physician to the Montreal General Hospital. He was always active in some study, the results of which communicated in various ways added to his fame. In 1884 he went on a second visit to Europe, "to dust his brain," and while there he received an offer of the Chair of Clinical Medicine in the University of Pennsylvania. H. C. Wood, who later became a warm friend of Osler's, had come to Montreal to find out what was thought of him in this city. He fell in with some French doctors, who spoke so highly of the young professor, and at the Montreal General Hospital he was commended with such enthusiasm, that he returned to Philadelphia without seeing the members of the McGill faculty. Osler accepted the appointment. Before he left Canada he was elected president of the Canadian Medical Association. (His Montreal friends and the societies to which he belonged united in paying tributes to his character and ability.

The students to whom he had lectured presented him with a watch, suitably inscribed; and it was the watch he wore thereafter. Dr. Howard said McGill had lost its "potent ferment." Osler was then 35 years old; and his reputation was spread far beyond his own country. His V. of P. chair was a prize.

In Philadelphia he repeated the success he had won in Montreal. The students took to him at once; his colleagues held him in regard. His stay in the Quaker City was not very long. Johns Hopkins, who had died some years before, had left a good sum to found an hospital at Baltimore. The trustees offered the position of physician-in-chief to Dr. Osler. He organized the staff, and started the work of the various departments. He kept on with his studies, his papers and his books, and caused his wife anxiety lest his health should break down. She was an earnest advocate of his acceptance of the Regius Professorship of Medicine at Oxford when it was intimated he could have it; the place being in the gift of the Prime Minister, Mr. Balfour. Her views prevailed, though the salary was less than he was getting at Johns Hopkins.

The second volume deals with a new phase in Osler's career. The conditions were different from those to which he had been accustomed on this continent. He soon adapted himself to his surroundings, and won new friends. He had more leisure but never enough to be idle. He influenced for good the department that he directed. He developed his love for literature, general as well as medical. He loved old books. He built up a library. He kept on writing, issuing new editions of the *Principles and Practice of Medicine*, his greatest book, attending medical and hospital conventions, visiting America from time to time. He had one son, Revere, who had his father's traits and likings. He was killed in the last year of the war when his battery was badly hit. The blow evidently hit the father hard, though he said little, and did what he could to cheer Lady Osler. The only relief for sorrow, he held, was time and hard work. He went on with his duties at the soldiers' hospitals in England; he was a colonel in the Medical Service. His wife also was an active worker for the war sufferers. He won in England a full measure of the respect and regard that attached to him in America. On his 70th birthday he was made the recipient of congratulations from two continents. He caught a cold, which developed into pneumonia, and, as he remarked, "pneumonia at seventy is fatal." He continued to write to his friends, some of whom were admitted to see him. Some of his latest writing was as to the disposition he wished to be made of old books he had loved. After an operation on recovering from the anaesthetic, he said to his friend, Dr. Malloch, "Well, it's good to have gone so long with so little wrong with me; but I feel with Franklin than I have been too far across the river to go back and have it over again." On Christmas eve, he asked to have Milton's "Nativity" read, from his favorite first edition. The night before he died Dr. Francis read to him from *The Ancient Mariner*, what the reader thought was an appropriate valedictory for his lover of men and books:

"He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small."

He died on the afternoon of December 29, after a haemorrhage from his wound, quietly and without pain. This tribute pronounced at the burial, summarises his life-work.

"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 despondent in the ragged paths of life. He achieved many honors and many dignities, but the proudest of all was his unwritten title 'the Young Man's Friend.'"

Dr. Harvey Cushing has written a book that will help the reader to comprehend something of the manner of man his friend was, what it was that won him fame as a great teacher of the greatest of the sciences, what qualities they were that made him beloved by young and old, what services he rendered to the profession of which he was a master, and to humanity. The author quotes largely from letters from and to Dr. Osler, that show the human side of his character, as his professional work showed the strength of his intellect and will power. Some letters are to and from his early friend and teacher Johnson; some are to his colleagues in the medical profession; some to his mother and other relatives whom he held in warm regard, as evidently they all held him. Many show the breadth of his sympathy, which knew no distinction of creed, nationality or condition. The biography should live as the pleasantly-written story of a man whose character presented many sides, all of them worthy, all of them inspiring.