

CUS417/37.15
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MANCHESTER.

SIR WILLIAM OSLER.

For some years whilst Dr Osler was at Johns Hopkins Hospital I carried on a fitful correspondence with him and like many other young men received "honour" and encouragement from him - one far away from their own country - in original work that I was interested in.

He was specially friendly to me when I was Editor of the Medical Chronicle as his letter (No. 1) from Baltimore in 1903 shews. After I met him in 1906 I told him of my ambition to develop the Medical Chronicle into a publication of work of the Manchester School of Medicine on the lines of the Johns Hopkins Hospital Bulletin, and he encouraged the idea saying that the money spent over the publication of the Bulletin and Reports was money well spent by the Hospital. He sent me the paper on "Angina pectoris as an early symptom of aneurysm of the aorta" as practical support for my Editorship of the Chronicle. I was however unable to carry out my ambition in this matter. I met him in 1906 when he came to Manchester for the first time to attend the Inaugural Meeting of the Pathological Society of Great Britain & Ireland. He did not read any paper at the meeting but proposed the toast of the University of Manchester at the dinner. On the Sunday morning after the meeting he went with the late Dr. Henry Ashby, Dr. now Sir Frederick Mott, Dr, now Sir Humphrey Rolleston and President of the Royal College of Physicians and myself to the Manchester Childrens' Hospital, Pendlebury and I remember that he

was specially interested in a case of Indurative Mediastino-Pericarditis on which the late Dr. Thomas Harris who died in September 1906 had published a monograph in 1895. We thought that Osler had not seen a case like it before.

In the afternoon he went to the Royal Infirmary to call on the residents and presented their Common Room with a portrait, endorsed in his writing "To the Saintly & Sabbath-keeping House Physicians & Surgeons of the M.R.I. in memory of a very pleasant visit. Wm. Osler". It still hangs in the room.

After he returned to Oxford I sent him a copy of my book on "The Lives and Work of the Honorary Staff of the Manchester Infirmary, 1752-1830", a book greatly after his own heart; and he was most interested in the sketch of Dr. John Ferriar who wrote "Illustrations of Sterne" pointing out the many plagiarisms in Sterne's works. He had intended to write an account of Ferriar himself (letter 2) and I offered to place at his disposal all my information and notes about him. To this he replied (Letter 3) that he had not time and that my sketch of him was very good and the best he knew. He also told me in conversation that I had left nothing for him to do. In the meantime I had found that Ferriar's descendants lived near Leek in Staffordshire, and wrote asking for a photographic copy of a miniature which I heard was in their possession. I received this in September and sent one to Dr. Osler and also told him that the remains of Ferriar's library were there and suggested a visit. To this he replied (Letter 4) expressing his delight in the thought of going with me

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to see it. His engagements prevented the visit for the time and as I subsequently found that there were no medical books left in the library, only classical ones, we never went.

It was chiefly through Dr. Osler's influence that I was elected to the Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians next year (1907). We spent a considerable time during the meeting of the Pathological Society, and whenever he was in Manchester, in the large library of the Manchester Medical Society, then containing over 30,000 books in which are many of the earlier printed books of what may be called the "Medical incunabula" period. I knew the Library very well as I was Secretary of its Committee and had worked in it a very great deal, cataloguing and administering.

He came to Manchester again, ^{the same or} next year I think, ^(he did not take his letters along) and called on me as he wanted to collect information about James Crossley of Manchester Solicitor and bibliophile, who was instrumental in founding the (Manchester) Chetham Society, ^{he (W.O.)} who had published as ^{he} thought what Dr. Osler called a Bowdlerised edition of Sir Thomas Browne's works and he was himself thinking of editing the works.

I introduced him to the late Charles W. Sutton, ^{of} the City Librarian, who corrected Dr. Osler's information on this point and who showed him a volume of tracts the only writings by Sir Thomas Browne which Crossley had edited. He came to my rooms afterwards and began talking about the Oxford Medical Publications in the initiation of which he was just then assisting and advising.

I asked him if he had arranged for a book on Life Assurance in General Practice in the scheme. He said "No", and asked "Why"? I then told him that I had the M.S. of one ready and he immediately

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asked me to send it to the late Mr. James Keogh Murphy, Editor of the Publications. This I did and the work was one of the earliest books published by the new scheme.

In a later year, 1912, I wrote to ask his advice about a book on the "Care & Management of Children" which I had written to give young & inexperienced doctors, and "new" mothers, and nurses practical & elementary information about ~~new~~ babies, how to feed them properly and avoid minor troubles, which existing books on the subject did not do. He encouraged me to go on with it as the "material was

first rate, and very healthy" "excellent - should be very successful" and said that he "liked it very much". / 5) Dr. Osler took the

M.S. & it also forms one of the Oxford Publications

(5) He laid it before the Censors of the Royal College of Physicians

and consent for publication which

The last visit which he paid to Manchester was in 1912 when Dr. E. S. Reynolds was President of the Manchester Medical Society to give an address to the Society on the "Diagnosis of Early Pulmonary Tuberculosis". This he did before as large an audience, including many students, as the society had ever had, and although there was nothing very new in the subject matter, which, as a matter of fact, he did not reach until he had given us half an hour of "Oslerism" in its most charming and inimitable form, the address was a great success. At a small dinner afterwards, given by the President, Sir Wm. Osler was in his best boyish "how to eat-cherry-pie" mood and speaking about my sketch of Ferriar laughingly said that he would like me to write a similar sketch about himself. I replied in kind and said I would do so if he would write one of me, and to carry on our little joke I sent him, later, a family tree tracing my descent from an original follower of George Fox. He was also interested to know that one of our family's earliest marriage certificates is in the Bodleian Library. Small, personal matters, though they were, they interested him. It was eventually to me a sad end to our after dinner fun to pay a small tribute of respect to his memory in the medical press.

His views on the teaching of Medical students always emphasized the importance of bed-side work, and when he was on the Continent, just before the war on some Centenary business or looking up the history of a French Physician (? Pierre Charles Alexander Louis) he wrote to me describing the methods adopted in Paris telling me that Medical students had practically no systematic teaching in medicine and surgery but were turned into the wards at once and practically for all their undergraduate life after finishing with the preliminary Sciences. Contact with the patient should be the alpha and omega of medical students' life and it was on the lines of forming small classes so that all the students individually could examine the patients that I planned the teaching at the Manchester Royal Infirmary when I was Dean of Clinical Instruction.

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