

THE LIFE OF SIR WILLIAM OSLER

BY

HARVEY CUSHING

IN TWO VOLUMES

ILLUSTRATED

CANADA, 1849-1884

Bond Head and Dundas—Toronto—Montreal

The UNITED STATES, 1884-1905

Philadelphia—Baltimore

OXFORD, 1905-1919

TO MEDICAL STUDENTS

IN THE HOPE THAT SOMETHING OF OSLER'S SPIRIT
MAY BE CONVEYED TO THOSE OF A GENERATION
THAT HAS NOT KNOWN HIM ; AND PARTICULARLY TO
THOSE IN AMERICA, LEST IT BE FORGOTTEN WHO
IT WAS THAT MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO
WORK AT THE BEDSIDE IN THE WARDS

HUMPHREY MILFORD

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

25-27 RICHMOND STREET WEST, TORONTO

LONDON EDINBURGH GLASGOW NEW YORK

MELBOURNE BOMBAY CAPE TOWN

1925

Two Volumes, Large 8vo.
Pages xvi+686+xii+728=1442



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The binding is blue cloth with gilt lettering.



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THE Life of Sir William Osler by his friend and disciple, Harvey Cushing, is a big book. But the subject is multifarious. Osler's life is a part of the history of three countries—Canada, the United States, and Great Britain. His profound influence pervaded the whole of the English-speaking world. His name was a talisman wherever medicine was taught, studied, or practised. The variety of his interests, and his enormous powers of work, made his life a kaleidoscope of public activity; and the materials for his history, in his own letters and writings, and in the letters and recollections of his friends, are immense. His biographer's greatest difficulty has been so to select from this mass that the salient features of Osler's life and character shall stand out.

He has succeeded. It is impossible to read fifty pages of the book without realizing that Osler was indeed a very great man. The story, which begins in the wilds of Upper Canada, passes through Toronto, Montreal, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, and ends—though with much crossing and recrossing the Atlantic—in Oxford and London, is pre-eminently a medical story. It is a good deal diversified with literature and bibliography, lightened by the kindliness and humour which sprang out of many friendships, and everywhere warmed by a passionate devotion to suffering humanity and to the cause of Work and Knowledge. It is none the less a professional life, and its atmosphere is that of the hospital and the laboratory. At the same time it is not technical, and it may be read by a layman with almost the same interest and absorption

which it will communicate to members of the Faculty. The layman will perhaps be even more struck than the professional by the picture which the 'Life' gives of the profession as a whole, and of its huge expenditure of talent, money, and goodwill against the brute forces of disease, and ignorance and dirt.

Of this great effort Osler was the missionary. His great Text-book—in itself a sufficient life-work for a hard-worked practitioner—revolutionized not only the teaching but also, in a great measure, the practice of medicine. Wherever he went he communicated energy and enthusiasm as from an inexhaustible spring. He lifted his finger, and thousands of dollars flowed into the treasuries of medical research. When he left a medical school at which he had laboured the effect was consternation. 'We are likely to lose Osler, and what in the world shall we do?' asked Provost Pepper of Philadelphia. 'But what are we to do here?' wrote a colleague at Johns Hopkins, when he left Baltimore.

Every page of the Biography illustrates and enforces Osler's rule of life—'to do the day's work well and not to bother about to-morrow.' His genius lay in his extraordinary power of observing this rule and—without apparent effort—of causing others to observe it. This was the secret of the wonderful life which is unfolded in these pages.

The specimen pages which follow will convey some idea of the scope of the book.

Henry V. Ogden, a Southerner whose parents had gone to Canada after the Civil War, had been at Bishop's College School at Lennoxville near the lakes Magog and Memphremagog in Southern Quebec. He was a tall youth, therefore with schoolboy quickness of wit called 'Og, Rex Basan', and there was a school jingle concerning 'Og, Gog, and Memphremagog' which might mystify boys less familiar with the Scriptures than those attending a church school. As a first-year student in medicine, Ogden had been attending Osler's lectures, and on learning from Rogers that he was living in a forlorn boarding-house in a cheap part of the town, Buller was persuaded by Osler to have him taken in.

... I can, and do [writes Ogden], see him perfectly as he came up to my room on the third floor of 1351 St. Catherine Street, the second or third night after I moved in. I happened to be sitting up in bed reading at physiology. He broke out at once in praise of the habit of reading in bed, but heartily disapproved the physiology—only literature, never medicine. He walked across the room standing with his back to me, his hands in his trousers' pockets, tilting up and down on his toes, and inspecting the little collection of about twenty or thirty books I had ranged on two small hanging shelves; and taking down the 'Golden Treasury' came over, sat on the foot of the bed, and half-recited, half-read, interjecting a running comment, a number of the poems. Then tossing the book to me he said: 'You'll find that much better stuff than physiology for reading in bed.' That same evening, too, he spoke of Sir Thomas Browne and the 'Religio', and probably for the first time, for I don't remember his making any reference to the subject in the lectures at the college. His enthusiasm rose as he spoke, and running downstairs he brought up his copy, pointed out and read several passages and then left me. . . .

The whole incident—W. O.'s coming up to my room, I mean—made a tremendous impression, for I had never before met a professor who struck one as so completely human, who actually liked some of the same things you did, and above all talked about them with you as an elder equal, so to speak. As you can imagine, it started my relations with him on a pleasant footing and in a pleasant direction, and naturally I have blessed my friend Rogers a thousand times for getting me into 1351.

The three upstairs tenants breakfasted with Dr. Buller, familiarly known as the 'Landlord', but otherwise they lived a life apart—a young professor and two students who became friends and intimates. Incidentally the students

were used by the professor from time to time for his own dire purposes, and Ogden one day was sent to perform an autopsy on a horse that had died from some mysterious nervous ailment. It necessitated the removal 'intact and in one piece' of the animal's brain and spinal cord, a difficult enough procedure even for one more experienced, and it took Ogden nearly all day. Not knowing how to dispose of the trophy, it being late afternoon, he took it home and proudly laid it out full-length in the family bath-tub, where it unfortunately was first discovered by Buller, who was furiously angry. Osler luckily came in in time to save from harm both specimen and student, and pacified the 'landlord' by agreeing to take the first bath.

In his reminiscences Dr. Rogers has stated that 'Osler's charity reached everyone in whom he could find some measure of sincerity and application'; that 'he had the greatest contempt for the doctor who made financial gain the first object of his work'; and 'even seemed to go as far as to think that a man could not make more than a bare living and still be an honest and competent physician'. His student house-mates remember only three consultations in his office, which indeed was hardly suited for this purpose, being usually littered with untidy evidence of literary activity. One of these consultations, however, was such an important one that preparations had to be made for it and Ogden was requisitioned as an assistant, for the patient was none other than old Peter Redpath, the wealthy Montreal sugar-refiner, who being on the 'M. G. H.' Board had hoped that the newly appointed physician might be able to cure him of an intractable lumbago. He arrived exhausted after mounting the stairs, and in due course they proceeded to treat him by acupuncture, a popular procedure of the day, which consists in thrusting a long needle into the muscles of the small of the back. At each jab the old gentleman is said to have ripped out a string of oaths, and in the end got up and hobbled out, no better of his pain, this to Osler's great distress, for he had expected to give him immediate relief which, as he said, 'meant a million for McGill'.

The first glimmering of Osler's subsequent deep interest

in matters relating to medical history and biography dates from this time, in connexion with an aged French-Canadian, a one-time *voyageur* in the service of the American Fur Company who had been accidentally wounded in the side by the discharge of a musket on the 6th of June 1822 at Michilimacinac. This accident and its consequences, and the fact that the victim came under the care of William Beaumont, a United States Army surgeon stationed at the time in this frontier post, led to the most important contributions to the physiology of digestion made during the century. Fifty-seven years had elapsed, but, according to a note in the *Montreal Medical Journal* for August of this year, Alexis St. Martin, father of twenty children, still with the hole in his stomach, was living at St. Thomas, Joliette County, Province of Quebec. It is not improbable that this note may have been inserted by Osler himself, for it was his invariable custom to tell the story of Beaumont and St. Martin when taking up the subject of digestion in his course in physiology. After doing so he usually asked the class where St. Martin's stomach should finally be deposited. A student of the time recalls that, in his year, some one shouted: 'The McGill Museum!' Osler said: 'No'. Another then volunteered, 'Ottawa', and again, 'No', when a third suggested, 'The Hunterian Museum'; whereupon Osler said: 'Can't you use your heads? The United States Army Museum in Washington, of course', and at this juncture a red-headed Irish student asked 'Why?'

This had gone on with successive classes for a number of years and it became generally known that Osler expected to hold a post-mortem examination after old St. Martin's demise. So in this spring of 1880 Ogden was told that he might have to go out to Joliette County at a minute's notice, for it was learned that St. Martin's end was near. Knowledge of Osler's intent had reached the community, which had apparently been aroused in opposition, and on the day of St. Martin's death a warning telegram came from the local doctor, saying: 'Don't come for autopsy; will be killed', and this was followed by the announcement that the grave was being guarded every night by French Canadians armed with rifles; but it was

his private car to St. Andrews, New Brunswick, where they had made arrangements for a cottage.

During this month of July, with the aid of a medical dictionary, a copy of Osler's Text-book was being read word for word by a layman passing his summer in the Catskill Highlands—an event of far greater importance to medicine and of greater biographical importance than the mere happenings of Osler's own summer vacation in New Brunswick. This gentleman happened to be the member of John D. Rockefeller's philanthropic staff who was successful in directing his interests towards medical research, and as Osler's volume was an essential link in this process, the story deserves telling here in his own words, though five years elapsed before Osler knew of the incident.

In the early summer of 1897 my interest in medicine was awakened by a . . . Minneapolis boy who in his loneliness in New York used often to spend his week-ends with us in Montclair. His deceased father had been a homeopathic physician but he himself was studying in the regular school. I determined as a result of my talks with this enthusiastic young student to make myself more intelligent on the whole subject of medicine, and at his suggestion I bought a copy of Dr. Osler's 'Principles and Practice of Medicine'. . . . I read the whole book without skipping any of it. I speak of this not to commemorate my industry or intelligence but to testify to Osler's charm, for it is one of the very few scientific books that are possessed of high literary quality. There was a fascination about the style itself that led me on, and having once started I found a hook in my nose that pulled me from page to page, and chapter to chapter, until the whole of about a thousand large and closely printed pages brought me to the end.

But there were other things besides its style that attracted and intensified my interest. . . . To the layman student, like me, demanding cures, and specifics, he had no word of comfort whatever. In fact, I saw clearly from the work of this thoroughly enlightened, able and honest man, perhaps the foremost practitioner in the world, that medicine had—with the few exceptions above mentioned—no cures, and that about all that medicine up to 1897 could do was to suggest some measure of relief, how to nurse the sick, and to alleviate in some degree the suffering. Beyond this, medicine as a cure had not progressed. I found further that a large number of the most common diseases, especially of the young and middle-aged, were infectious or contagious, caused by infinitesimal germs that are breathed in with the atmosphere, or are imparted by contact or are taken in with the food or drink or communicated by the incision of insects in the skin.

I learned that of these germs, only a very few had been identified and isolated. I made a list—and it was a very long one at that time, much longer than it is now—of the germs which we might reasonably hope to discover but which as yet had never been, with certainty, identified; and I made a longer list of the infectious or contagious diseases for which there had been as yet no cure at all discovered.

When I laid down this book I had begun to realize how woefully neglected in all civilized countries and perhaps most of all in this country, had been the scientific study of medicine. . . . It became clear to me that medicine could hardly hope to become a science until it should be endowed, and qualified men could give themselves to uninterrupted study and investigation, on ample salary, entirely independent of practice. . . . Here was an opportunity for Mr. Rockefeller to become a pioneer. This idea took possession of me. The more I thought of it the more interested I became. I knew nothing of the cost of research; I did not realize its enormous difficulty; the only thing I saw was the overwhelming and universal need and the infinite promise, world-wide, universal, eternal. Filled with these thoughts and enthusiasms, I returned from my vacation on July 24th. I brought my Osler into the office at No. 26 Broadway, and there I dictated for Mr. Rockefeller's eye a memorandum in which I aimed to show to him the actual condition of medicine in the United States and the world as disclosed by Dr. Osler's book. I enumerated the infectious diseases and pointed out how few of the germs had yet been discovered and how great the field of discovery; how few specifics had yet been found and how appalling was the unremedied suffering. I pointed to the Koch Institute in Paris. I pointed out the fact, first stated by Huxley I think, that the results in dollars or francs of Pasteur's discoveries about anthrax and on the diseases of fermentation and of the silkworm had saved for the French nation a sum far in excess of the entire cost of the Franco-German War. I remember insisting in this or some subsequent memoranda that even if the proposed institute should fail to discover anything, the mere fact that he, Mr. Rockefeller, had established such an institute of research, if he were to consent to do so, would result in other institutes of a similar kind, or at least other funds for research being established, until research in this country would be conducted on a great scale; and that out of the multitudes of workers we might be sure in the end of abundant rewards, even though those rewards did not come directly from the institute which he might found.

These considerations took root in the mind of Mr. Rockefeller and, later, of his son. Eminent physicians were consulted as to the feasibility of the project, a competent agent was employed to secure the counsel of specialists on research, and out of wide consultation

I had prepared a couple of chapters, but continually procrastinated on the plea that up to the 40th year a man was fit for better things than text-books. Time went on and as I crossed this date I began to feel that the energy and persistence necessary for the task were lacking. In September 1890 I returned from a four months' trip in Europe, shook myself, and towards the end of the month began a work on Practice. I had nearly finished the chapter on Typhoid Fever when Dr. Granger, Messrs. Appleton's agent, came from New York to ask me to prepare a Text-book on Medicine. We haggled for a few weeks about terms and finally, selling my brains to the devil, I signed the contract. My intention had been to publish the work myself and have Lippincott or Blakiston (both of whom offered) handle the book, but the bait of a guaranteed circulation of 10,000 copies in two years and fifteen hundred dollars on the date of publication was too glittering, and I was hooked. October, November, and December were not very satisfactory months, and January 1st, 1891, saw the infectious diseases scarcely completed. I then got well into harness. Three mornings of each week I stayed at home and dictated from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. On the alternate days I dictated after the morning Hospital visit, beginning about 11.30 a.m. The spare hours of the afternoon were devoted to correction and reference work. Early in May I gave up the house, 209 Monument St., and went to my rooms at the Hospital. The routine there was :—8 a.m. to 1 p.m. dictation ; 2 p.m. visit to the private patients and special cases in the wards, after which revision, etc. After 5 p.m. I saw my outside cases ; dinner at the club about 6.30, loafed until 9.30, bed at 10 p.m., up at 7 a.m. I had arranged to send MS. by 1st of July and on that date I forwarded five sections, but the publishers did not begin to print until the middle of August. The first two weeks of August I spent in Toronto, and then with the same routine I practically finished the MS. by about October the 15th. During the summer the entire MS. was carefully revised for the press by Mr. Powell of the English Department of the University. The last three months of 1891 were devoted to proof reading. In January I made out the index, and in the entire work nothing so wearied me as the verifying of every reference. Without the help of Lafleur and Thayer, who took the ward work off my hands, I never could have finished in so short a time. My other assistants also rendered much aid in looking up references and special points. During the writing of the work I lost only one afternoon through transient indisposition, and never a night's rest. Between September, 1890, and January, 1892, I gained nearly eight pounds in weight.

During all these months of composition Osler's clinical duties were by no means neglected. An instalment of Koch's tuberculin had been sent in December to John S.

world, supinely acquiesces in conditions shameful beyond expression. I do not propose to weary you with statistics, of which our Journals and Reports are full, but I will refer to a few facts drawn at random from three cities and three States, illustrating this shocking neglect.

And he went on to expose Philadelphia, Baltimore, and the national capital as examples of how in sanitary measures we were a generation behind Europe :

The solution of the problem is easy. What has been done in many parts of Europe can be done here ; the practical conviction of the people is all that is necessary. Upon them is the responsibility. Let us meanwhile neither scold nor despair. The good-natured citizens who make up our clientèle, pay our bills and vote the straight party ticket, have but little appreciation of a scientific question, and are led as easily (more easily) by a Perkins or a Munyon than by a Lister or a Koch. Under the circumstances it is marvellous so much has been achieved in fifty years. 'The larger sympathy of man with man', which we physicians are called upon to exercise daily in our calling, demands that we continue our efforts—efforts often fruitless in results, but very helpful to ourselves—to educate this foolish public. What is needed seems so easy of accomplishment—the gain would be enormous ! We ask so little—the corresponding benefits are so great ! We only demand that the people of this country shall do what Elisha asked of Naaman the Syrian—that they shall wash and be clean—that they shall scour the soil on which they live, and cleanse the water which they drink.

On the same day, in an extemporaneous address ¹ to the Albany medical students, he emphasized three things : the good fortune which was theirs in entering medicine just at that time ; the doing of the day's work without too much thought of the morrow, which gave a chance for his favourite quotation from Carlyle ; and lastly, the need of cultivating equally the head and heart :

There is [he is quoted as saying] a strong feeling abroad among people—you see it in the newspapers—that we doctors are given over nowadays to science ; that we care much more for the disease and its scientific aspects than for the individual. I don't believe it, but at any rate, whether that tendency exists or not, I would urge upon you in your own practice to care particularly for John and Elizabeth, as George Eliot says,—but I will not add, especially for Elizabeth—but to care more particularly for the individual patient than for the special features of the disease. . . . Dealing, as we do,

¹ Cf. *Albany Medical Annals*, 1899, xx. 307.

his other two valedictories.¹ 'Of the well-stocked rooms', he said, 'which it should be the ambition of every young doctor to have in his house, the library, the laboratory, and the nursery—books, balances, and bairns—as he may not achieve all three I would urge him to start at any rate with the books and the balances.' And there followed advice on reading, on an avocation, on a 'quinquennial brain-dusting', with a picture of the type of doctor needed in the country districts—that best product of our profession. At the close came some most touching paragraphs of the long line of students whom he had taught and loved and who had died prematurely—mentally, morally, or bodily—the many young men whom he had loved and lost.

What happened at the undergraduates' banquet in the afternoon, where he again spoke, may be easily imagined; and later he met with his old friends of the 'Medico-Chi.' and read a further paper on Aneurysm which smacks of his activities of the '70's, while he was the boy-professor at McGill. On leaving Montreal he paid a flying visit to Toronto to say good-bye to his mother, and her parting admonition to her youngest son was: 'Remember, Willie, the shutters in England will rattle as they do in America.' Rattling shutters, like idle tongues, are common to all places and get on the nerves: human nature is much the same everywhere. Was ever a lecture on patience, charity, and tolerance better epitomized than in these few parting words of Ellen Pickton Osler, then nearing her century-mark?

In the account of those last few years in Baltimore, little has been said of the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty, in whose behalf he had continued so assiduously to labour. Its library had for the second time outgrown the quarters provided for it and a movement was on foot to raise money by popular subscription for a building suitable for a real academy of medicine, which was to bear Osler's name. How this larger project fell through after his 'Fixed Period' address, because of the many subscriptions which were withdrawn, need not be related, though it may be

¹ Reprinted in 'Aequanimitas [&c.]', 2nd edition, 1906, as No. xx; also, in part, by Christopher Morley in his selection of 'Modern Essays'. N.Y., Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1921.

That he was much on the wing, in town and elsewhere, and that others no less than MacAlister 'absorbed his faith and enthusiasm', is apparent from an abundance of similar episodes which have been supplied. But even in his absence 7 Norham Gardens went on as usual—already a lure for the young, just as 1 West Franklin Street had been :

We had a lovely Sunday [writes his wife] though W. O. was in Cambridge. Our Sunday afternoons are astonishing—the men come pouring in from 3.30, and then again at 8.30 after church for supper which is always informal and all on the table—the chafing-dish being a great amusement and surprise to the Englishmen. I met W. O. in town and tried to carry him off to see L——, but he had two consultations in the other direction and could not take the time. He is dining in London tonight [Nov. 27th] and returns early for Sir John Burdon Sanderson's funeral; and many men for luncheon who come to the funeral.

To judge from the 'University Acts' the funeral of a former Regius Professor, however, did not interfere with a scheduled university function, for: 'In a Convocation holden on Tuesday, November 28th, the following business was submitted to the House':

1. *Nomination of Delegate of the University Press.* William Osler, D.M., Hon. D.Sc., Student of Christ Church, Regius Professor of Medicine, was nominated by the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors to be a Delegate of the University Press, in place of William Sanday, D.D., Canon of Christ Church, who has been constituted a Perpetual Delegate thereof, [etc., etc.].¹

¹ The present Oxford Press occupies a building resembling more closely a college than a book factory, for it is built around an enclosed garden on the quadrangular plan of the Oxford colleges. It moved into these quarters 100 years ago from the old Clarendon Building where the Delegates continue to hold their stated meetings. This accounts for the fact, confusing to many, that a 'Clarendon Press imprint' signifies that the Delegates themselves, *auctoritate universitatis*, have passed favourably upon a manuscript, whereas an imprint of the 'Oxford University Press' (of which there are many types) indicates that the responsibility of publication has unofficially been accepted by the Publisher to the University, whose office was long at Amen Corner—now in new quarters at Amen House, Warwick Square—in London.

Oct. 1907, p. 557] as to (1) is it the disease which starts with fever, convulsion & coma, & the child wakes hemiplegic; (2) what is the lesion described? (3) How many p.m.'s? Yours, W. O.

This is but a sample of the notes bravely written the first days of October. It was no new thing for him to be laid up after an exposure such as he had had. He prepared to enjoy himself during the enforced confinement, in his usual fashion, reading and writing in bed, with books and papers and magazines accumulating on coverlet and table until they overflowed to the floor. Though he had always said in a half-joking fashion that the pneumococcus he had harboured so many years would some day carry him off, he had no premonition as yet that his time had come, and wrote on the 2nd to Thomas W. Salmon: 'Please order for me Quixote Psychiatry by Victor Robinson, the review of which is in the July No. of Mental Hygiene. I knew Clevenger & should like very much to have the story of his life. Tell the press to send the bill.' And a few days later to Mrs. Chapin:

In bed, waiting for Sunday Bkfst with a cold, & no stylo—downstairs—but you will not mind a lead pencil. We have enjoyed your letters so much & hearing all about the family. . . . Grace is in fine form. Jersey did her more good than Harrogate would have done. I am worrying her now with a cold—& *cof* caught on my way from Scotland—she will have told you no doubt. We are all so unhappy about Wilson—poor man no wonder he has broken down. Think of the strain of these years. And the pity of it all is that had he come over as President of the U. S. & not as head of the Dem. Party, & had Root & Lodge with him, all this delay & trouble would have been saved. *Damn Politics and Parties*. We are having a little strike of our own which seems to demonstrate how well the country can get along without the R. R. union. . . . If you see Fred Shattuck or George my love to them. What F. S.¹ & Billy Thayer² wrote about me was the bestest.

Aware by that time that he was in for something more serious than usual, he began to call off his engagements, which were many, in Wales and elsewhere, and to with-

¹ 'A Vigorous Medical Septuagenarian.' *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, July 10, 1919, p. 46, by F. C. Shattuck.

² 'Osler the Teacher.' *Johns Hopkins Hospital Bulletin*, July 1919, xxx. 198-200.

to send his bids to the auction firm. Though the spirit of the gambler is upon him there is method in his mania, for he makes his calculations with shrewdness and knows the prices which his favourite books have brought. He is never disappointed, for he has a strong conviction that the world is one big auction room in which the gods sell everything to the man who can work or to the man who can wait. If he loses to-day tomorrow may bring luck, and this element of uncertainty gives zest to the dispute. Into this final stage I confess to have lapsed, gradually and insensibly, and without the loss of my self-respect. Nor is he an indiscriminate buyer, seeking incunabula and *editions de luxe* with equal avidity, but one guiding principle, *deep interest in an author* limits the range of his desires and keeps his library within the compass of his house and purse. The great difficulty is to keep the passion within bounds, so fascinating and so numerous is the company into which it brings him! Any one of the elect may absorb his energies for months. Charles Lamb says that he lived on Landor's little poem *Rose Aylmer* for a week. After first finding Fuller I lived on him for six months; and when hungry or thirsty after the mental labours of the day, I find refreshment in the *Worthies* or in any page of the *Holy and Profane State*. Before this happy stage is reached you must know the man—not that biography should precede, rather indeed it should follow, the systematic study of a man's work, but to get on terms of refreshing intimacy you must love the man as a friend and know the phases of his mind as expressed in his writings. To be supremely happy, to the instinct of the collector must be added the mental attitude of the student. Either alone lacks completeness; the one supplements the other. I can read with pleasure a classic such as *Rasselas* though issued in 'penny dreadful' form by Mr. Stead, [but] feel nearer to the immortal Samuel when I hold the original in my hand. It is all a matter of sentiment—so it is, but the very marrow of my bones is full of sentiment, and as I feel towards my blood relations—or some of them!—and to my intimate friends in the flesh, so I feel to these friends in the spirit with whom I am in communion through the medium of the printed word. . . .

The Association of Medical Librarians, with sixteen members present and Osler in the chair, met in Saratoga on June 10th, the day before the sessions of the American Medical Association opened. Osler had 'packed' the meeting by bringing in a few of his assistants, and they were well repaid, for he read a delightful address on 'Some Aspects of American Medical Bibliography'—an address¹ prepared with no less care for this small group of people than it would have been for a larger audience. A single

¹ Reprinted as No. XV in 'Aequanimitas and other Addresses'.

The Secretary of the High Cockolorum Lord Chancellor presents his compliments to Miss Muriel Brock & begs to inform her that the Lord Chancellor himself is at present engaged upon a handy manual dealing with the whole subject of table-manners for children. He asked me to say in addition, that being once at the Gaudy dinner at Christ Church, he sat next to Professor Osler, & was made painfully aware of the horribly teutonic character of that gentleman's table-manners, and he has instructed the Solicitor-General to bring an action against Dr. Osler should he dare to bring out his proposed tea-table manners for children.

Signed OBADIAH TWEEDLEDUM,
General Secretary.

An explanation of these messages by their recipient follows :

The first time he came to tea with me and a few of my friends he behaved in a manner such as we had never before come across, and which delighted us immensely. For instance, he insisted upon cutting the cake from the *inside*, in squares ; and gave us cups filled with sugar, in which there were only two or three drops of tea. He also assured us (contrary to all previous teachings !) that it was absolutely the correct thing to lick all one's fingers one after the other after eating anything sticky ; and that the only enjoyable way of having bread and jam was a pile of jam on the plate with a few crumbs of bread in it, the whole of which one ate with a spoon ! He also said that the way to eat chocolates was to open your mouth and shut your eyes and have them thrown in by someone at the other side of the table. Every time he came he would invent some new amusement, and we found these things so pleasant that we asked him to write a treatise on 'Table-manners for Children' as he said our manners were atrocious and he felt we ought to have some sort of manual to guide us. He managed after some years' correspondence, to evade it by making up the letter of the Lord High Cockolorum. That is how it all came about, as far as I can remember.

The only satisfactory explanation of Osler's unforgetting memory for all the pet- and play-names he concocted on first acquaintance with the innumerable 'darlings' who came to know him—and not only the names but the incidents—lies in the reality of his play ; and his carryings-on for years with 'Susan' and Rosalie, with 'Muriel' and her table-manners, are merely examples chosen from many similar episodes, which had their origin in as many nurseries. They deserve a volume to themselves, could one be written out of 'thistledown and moonbeams', for of such elements,