

1028/63/20

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1867
at 18Chapter IIITRINITY COLLEGE AND THE TORONTO MEDICAL SCHOOL.From his mother to W.P.

Oct. 8th.

My dear Willie

Yesterday we had the pleasure of packing a box for you which the Pater took into Hamilton it contains your coat, 4 prs. of socks, 6 towels pr. of drawers, necktie, photos, pocket-handkerchief, Fur Cap, Mufflers (2 prs.) Dr. Bonod, 2 Books, 5 jars of fruit, one of which is marked for Marion. I hope you'll enjoy it use the apple first as it will not be so likely to keep -- apples, pears, and a canister of grapes if they reach you in order you'll know what to do with the other books, Woolen Vest and Trousers belong to Mr Edwards, in the vest pocket is the Copper-plate for card. I think these are all your belongings that we can find I put in an old shirt and scraps of Eng that I had not time to make up for you into handkfs. We are looking forward to Jenettes return on Saturday and are in a skrimmage of general settling up this week stoves putting up -- only this week have we finished the painting, papering and various alterations the Bath-room is a perfect success. The wet weather will be over, I hope before Sunday when the Ordination is to take place. 12 I think are coming up and they are billeted out on the Parish except 3 at the Rectory -- the Bp. and Mr. Stennet are to be at Miss Crook's. Nellie will soon be leaving us -- every day she is expecting to hear that

the house is ready for occupation but until they begin to move she stays here. Fanny is still here, Mary in London with Amy. Hennie and her three youngest have been up at Staple Hurst some time they return home tomorrow I expect them here to lunch today, the Baby is enormous such a contrast to Mickey who in his exuberance of spring and activity of mind is bent on coming to grief, he has the narrowest scrapes possible, a jammed finger, a cut eye, a bruised head is the common thing with him, he always calls B. B., Billee, and evidently thinks him you. We all send our love. Will you write and tell us when you get the box also whether you got the second cheque

Ever your loving Mother.

ELLEN OSLER

Box sent by the Steamer Algeria from Hamilton, it should have left this morning but had not arrived yesterday when Papa was at the wharf so it may be Friday the 9th when she leaves you must be sure and make enquiries for it. I hope it will not interfere with your time too much I fancy you have begun work in earnest now and do hope you will prosper to your satisfaction.

if one may
~~Evidently~~ to judge from this letter Forgetful of much of his personal

equipment, the young Osler entered Trinity College, Toronto, in the Fall of 1867. *Something more essential than books and undergarments* ~~He~~ nevertheless had in his possession one of the Dixon Prize

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Chapter III

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equipment, the young Osler entered Trinity College, Toronto, in the Fall

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 of 1867. He nevertheless had in his possession-one of the Dixon Prize

It is no place to enter into the story of Trinity College which had been founded seventeen years before by Bishop Strachan after King's College had ceased to be Anglican and had become the University of Toronto. A firm believer in the union of Church and State with the Church ~~in power~~ ^{in power} Strachan had long been the ^{uncompromising} centre of the fierce battles which had raged over the university question and the clergy reserves. ^{Many}

Scholarships which he had well earned at Weston, ~~and~~ ^{and} he apparently had

theology still in the back of his mind. ^{Trinity College School} was

naturally enough looked upon as a nursery for the divinity faculty

and most of the teachers at Trinity College itself were clergymen from

whom the visiting board at the school was constituted. But many of

the churchmen, as the times made more or less inevitable, were inter-

ested in natural history, and one of them indeed, the Rev. ^{John} Ambrey, Pro-

fessor of Classics, even offered a school prize for the best collection

of geological and entomological specimens.

Ministers with an interest in the natural sciences, particularly in the days when men's minds were greatly unsettled over original sin and Darwinism and Man's Place in Nature, when Wilberforce and Huxley represented the antipodes of thought - ^{and} ~~made~~ dangerous teachers for youths whom they expected to induct into the Church. What may be the pleasant avocation of one generation easily becomes the vocation of the next.

An introduction to zoology and to the Religio Medici had already done

much at Father Johnson's hands to deflect this impressionable boy from the very calling he might otherwise naturally have chosen, if for no other reason, in imitation of his revered master continuing with science merely as a pastime.

It is quite certain however that his mind was not fully made up until a year later, and it is probable that the determination became a fixed one through the unconscious influence of James Bovell who himself, curiously enough, was in the process of changing in the reverse direction from Medicine to the Church. If Johnson's influence over the school-boy had been considerable, that of "James Bovell, Esq., M.D., M.R.C.P." was ^{to become} far more so. From the first, Bovell who seems to have been ^{universally beloved} ~~a most lovable character~~, exercised a fascination for the boy which grew into an attachment of most unusual character. The two as has been seen, were thrown together at Weston where, in the capacity of medical attendant, Bovell repaired each week, and it is probable that during the boy's illness they became boon friends. It

is probable that during the following winter they ^{fly} went down together to where Bovell was off to repair on ~~the~~ ends to get away from his patients. Johnson's ~~and~~ At all events the collection of specimens continues

during the year. There was a Professor of Botany, too, in the University, the Rev. Thomas Hincks, the distinguished authority on British polyzoa, who seems to have been the only one of the teachers aside from Bovell to whom he subsequently referred.

James Bovell was born in Barbadoes in 1817 ^{where his family had long been resident. Possessed of ample means} went to England in

~~and after a short stay at Cambridge was taken ill and on his recovery determined to study medicine. He entered 1834, studied at Guy's Hospital and four years later took the medical degree in Glasgow, subsequently for several years he studied in~~

*Insert next page
Camp Hospital where he enjoyed the friendship of Dr Croyle in*

~~He was then~~ Dublin under those famous clinicians, Stokes and Graves, and after a severe attack of typhus fever, despite the advice of friends who pre-

~~dicted a brilliant career for him, he returned to Barbadoes. From 1848 there has~~

~~quite a migration first to London, there in 1848 he went to Canada, and two years later helped to organize the short-lived medical department for Trinity College.~~

Insert this incident the matter is next page by 2

The history of the Medical Schools of Upper Canada is a long and complicated one, with a succession of ^{institutions} ~~schools~~ which flourished,

languished and died.* The all-influential Bishop Strachan, acting

*The story up to 1850 is told in Wm. Canniff's The Medical Profession in Upper Canada, 1783-1850.

upon an old Royal Charter, had established a Church College - King's - in 1842, to which a medical department was attached. The Provincial legislature in 1849 repealed the earlier charter and designated the institution the University of Toronto. Undaunted, Bishop Strachan secured in 1850 another Royal Charter for a Church of England University, which became ^{the University of} ~~the~~ Trinity College, ^{University} receiving the support of loyal churchmen of the province. In connection with this institution the Upper Canada School of Medicine was organized by Drs. Bovell and Hodder. The situation would seem to be very similar to what was going on in London at the time, namely the establishment of King's College as an offset to the non-sectarian University College, where ~~as~~ the Bishop claimed, no moral or religious care was exercised over the medical students, who thereby became undisciplined and often went astray..

In this school, which for the times was an excellent one, re-
 quiring an arts degree for entrance, Bovell ^{acted as Dean and} was Professor of the In-
 stitutes of Medicine. Though full of promise, the school had a short
 life. Bovell was subsequently taken on to the Toronto Medical
 School faculty though he retained ^{the chair of Natural Theology} a position in Trinity, ~~two positions~~
~~in fact~~ ^{like until 1870 he lectured on Physiology & Pathology} ~~as Professor of Physiology and Chemistry, and Lecturer in~~
~~Natural Theology.~~ His particular and favourite course which, never-

theless, he sometimes forgot to attend and which a year later his young
 friend when in the Medical School ^{occasionally} ~~sometimes~~ used to conduct for him,
 was on the subject of physiology as related to theological conceptions.

← Down side

Dr. Bovell with his four daughters lived at the Hermitage on
 Spadina Avenue, and very soon the young Osler began to frequent the
 place to gather and study a variety of animals which even overflowed
 to 112 St. Patrick Street when one of the daughters married a Mr.
 Barwick and moved there to live. Just what he did as a first-year
 student in the University, if it was ^{other than} ~~any different from~~ what most

Cf. Arthur James Johnson in "The Founder of the Medical Faculty"
 Trinity University Review Jubilee No. June-July 1902 p. 104

young men do, is not very apparent, except that he repaired, as often as week-ends and vacations permitted, to Weston to go over with Father Johnson the increasing specimens of his collection of ^{algae} polyzoa.

A few class-room note-books of the period have been preserved.

One of them starts out bravely, under the date 21/10/67, with Latin

Prose Composition, and after the first exercise ^{there} is written in the

teacher's hand "Very good indeed my boy". But ^{after Humber} ~~often, nevertheless,~~

the exercises cease to be copied out, and the remainder of the book

is filled with notes regarding his fresh-water polyzoa, "Genus I Epi-

themia, Kutz Instules }?, adherent, quadrilateral; valves circinate

(?) furnished with transverse canaliculi, etc., etc., and there follow

varieties elaborately described from Humber Bay, Grenadier Pond, the

Thames London, (Ontario of course), Desjardin Canal, Burlington Bay,

Sandy Cove; and other Geni and Species from the same and other places

Niagara Falls, Lake Simcoe, the sunken boat in the mouth of the Humber

which figured in W. A. Johnson's note-book, Cyclolella Kutzingiana

of which there are myriads in the river at London 24/9/69, the Northern
Railway wharf where Navicula tumida are common, Kempenfeldt Bay, Land^aross
Farm London, Don River, Cedar Swamp Weston, and Buckley's water-trough
Dundas, which brings him home.

Reference has been made to the fact that Father Johnson used to read to the boys in the parsonage, and that he selected such works as the *Religio Medici* for their beauty of language. But it must have been more than this. That a high churchman should have cared particularly for Sir Thomas Browne is extraordinary, but that he should have been able to transmit this appreciation to a boy of seventeen is truly amazing. It moreover is an important thread in this story, which from this point follows it through to the end, and the 1862 edition of the *Religio*, practically his first book purchase, to which he referred more than once in his published addresses, was the very volume which lay on his coffin at Christ Church fifty-three years later.

In an address to the McGill students in 1899, after referring to the cultivation of interests other than purely professional ones, he urges outside reading, among the group of literary physicians Sir Thomas Browne, and says that "the *Religio Medici*, one of the great English classics, should be in the hands - in the hearts too -

of every medical student".

(From After Twenty-five Years, Address Sept. 21, 1899; p. 11).

"As I am on the confessional today, I may tell you that no book has had so enduring an influence on my life: I was introduced to it by my first teacher, the Rev. W. A. Johnson, Warden and Founder of the Trinity College School, and I can recall the delight with which I first read its quaint and charming pages. It was one of the strong influences which turned my thoughts towards medicine as a profession, and my most treasured copy - the second book I ever bought - has been a constant companion for thirty-one years, - comes viae vitaeque. Trite but true, is the comment of Seneca - 'If you are fond of books you will escape the ennui of life, you will neither sigh for evening, disgusted with the occupations of the day - nor will you live dissatisfied with yourself or unprofitable to others'."

In another place he gives the date of this purchase as 1867, but the writer is inclined to believe that this was a slip of memory.

This particular book, handsomely rebound and evidently much read, despite the few marks it contains - few for one who read with pencil or pen in hand - is the most precious and intimate book in what came to be

a rarely personal library. Beside it ^{the same} ~~is~~ another volume in its original covers, much read and ^{was} broken back, entitled "Varia: Readings from Rare Books" by J. Hain Friswell, London, 1866, and dedicated to G. W. Firth of Norwich. It is inscribed in his elder brother's hand: "W^m Osler from F. O., Xmas 1867". One of the best of the charming essays it contains is upon Sir Thomas Browne, and one may imagine a young man destined for the ministry reading about the "Religion of a Physician", and how few people knew about its author, mistaking him either for the facetious writer of "Lacomics" or the Tom Brown of Mr. Hughes' imagination; how he came to practice in Norwich and to write his books; how "Sir Thomas grew pleasantly old, and died as we have seen, boldly and manfully when his time came"; how he came to be buried there in St. Peter's in 1682; how in 1840 his grave was despoiled and his skull rescued from private hands came to adorn the museum of surgery in Norwich, prophetic of those passages in his "Urn Burial":

"But who knows the fate of his bones, or how often he is to be buried? Who hath the oracle of his ashes, or whither they are to be scattered. To be knaved out of our graves, to have our skulls made into drinking

Used to be

bowls and our bones turned into pipes to delight and sport our enemies, are tragical abominations, escaped in burning burials."

And these passages of Mr. Friswell's about the book and the man must have been read:

(From *Varia: Readings from Rare Books*, p.)

"But the 'Religio Medici', as it was his first will always be considered his chief work. It jumped suddenly into fame. The Earl of Dorset recommended this book to Sir Kenelm Digby, and Digby in twenty-four hours, part of which were spent in procuring and in reading the book, returned it, not with a letter, but with a book, in which there are 'some just remarks, acute censures, and profound speculations'. Such a review as that, issued by Sir Kenelm Digby, and addressed to the Earl of Dorset, was enough to sell any work, the public read it with avidity, and booksellers showed an equal eagerness in pirating, with hack authors in imitating it. So that, in 1682, the year of his death, it had reached the eighth edition.

* * *

"The occasion of the open avowal of Browne's faith was to refute the general scandal of his profession, which asserts that where there are three physicians two are Atheists, ubi tres medici duo Athei, and * * * as he nobly says, that 'I dare without usurpation assume the honourable style of a Christian' * * * and such reverential sentences as these: Thus there are two books from which I collect

my Divinity; besides that written one of God, another of his servant Nature, that universal and publick manuscript, that lies expans'd unto the eyes of all, those that never saw him in the one have discovered him in the other; * * *

Y have

It must have been the next year that the 1862 Tichor ^{and} of Fields Edition of the Completed Works, dedicated to the author, of the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table and of Rab and His Friends, was purchased at W. C. Chitwell's bookstore in Toronto. At least written on the fly-leaf is "W. Osler. Coll. S.S. Trin. Lent Term 28/2/'68", and on another leaf in the handwriting of Mary Thorne, a cousin, with whom he was greatly in love as a boy and to whom he must have loaned the book, there is his name and the date "August 28, 1868". In the book itself there are but ^{three} two marked passages.* Few marks were needed, for

*Check this up
C. W. notes*

*There are one or two corrections. Thus on page 137 of the "Urn Burial" where Browne says "Plato's historian of the other world lies twelve days uncorrupted", &c., W.O. has changed "twelve" to "ten", with marginal reference to the Republic, Bk. X(?).

only one other book, the Bible, did he come to know more nearly by heart. One of the marked paragraphs is dated "Dec. 6 1919" and will

come later in the this story. *first passage in the Religio is omitted by Osler and that the* The other is ~~the first~~ paragraph is in Section III p. 10

the "Religio":

(Religio Medici, P. 14?)

*add entry before Japs Reg. date delay
Journal*

"For my religion, though there be several circumstances that might persuade the world I have none at all, as the general scandal of my profession, the natural course of my studies, the indifferency of my behaviour and discourse in matters of religion, neither violently defending one, nor with that common ardour and contention opposing another; yet in despite hereof I dare, without usurpation, assume the honourable style of a Christian."

Our
Phy-
sic-
ian
a
Chris-
tian.

The two men who, living, ^{fundamentally} chiefly influenced William Osler's

life, and the one man, long dead, have been introduced. There will be one other.

part here taken on my type

*The first term of 1868 possibly, without any definite decision and
Henry Douglas Johnson recalls that Osler often came to work with him in
Dr. Burdell's study, on Devonian Avenue. He did not neglect his college
work, however, and the examination papers of the next June are preserved, and*

*and he began keeping a list of protozoa the earliest entry in
which is July 1868 (Cf. list)*

12th edition

16
Preserved also are the examination papers of the next June, and

very stiff examinations they were, held on successive days in Algebra,

Euclid, Greek (Medea and Hippolytus), the Catechism, Trigonometry, Latin

Prose, Roman History, Pass Latin (³Terance), Classics (Honours). How he

got through his trigonometry with his dislike of mathematics is difficult

to conceive. And certainly the Catechism test was searching enough

without the ^{enchantment} influence of the polyzoas to have ^{affected his} ~~influenced him in the~~

choice of a career. There were eighteen questions, including such as:

11. Show that the Holy Spirit is both a person and divine.
12. Eternal life is distinguished as being initial, partial, and perfectional. Explain and illustrate under each head from Scripture.