GUS-417/113.20

Feb. 1912

*The installment (for January) begins with an account of Nicolaus Steno 'of whom the Danes have good reason to be proud,' two sumptuous volumes of whose Opera Philosophica had recently been reissued in limited edition in Copenhagen by the Carlsbergfond and had doubtless just joined Osler's library. A note on "Les Collections Artistiques de la Faculté de Médecine de Paris" follows, and contains reminiscences of his winter in Paris when he came to know personally 'the treasures artistic and literary of the library of the medical faculty there'; and he speaks particularly of the portrait of Gui Patin which evidently interested him more than the precious Gobelin tapestries. It was a like in the

The installment ends with an obituary tribute to Sir(?) Samuel Wilks whose death had occurred in 1913, in the course of which is this reministrately, "Then a student in Montreal, during the summer of 1871, I had an opportunity to make a good many post mor tems at the General Hospital, and with the material so collected, I wrote my graduation thesis. habit to pester Dr. Palmer Howard for information and literature. and one day he handed to me Wilks's "Lectures on Morbid Anatomy," and from that time everything was plain sailing, as all the ordinary appearances met with were described fully. This was my first introduction to the well-known Guy's Hospital physician. When a student in London, Mr. Arthur Durham, one of the surgeons at Guy's, whom I knew quite well, took me to Dr. Wilks's wards one day, and I have very pleasant recollections of a delightful visit. In 1875 I sent him a copy of a study which I had made of a remarkable case of a miner's lung, which I had obtained from the body of a Nova Scotian miner who had died under my care in the smallpox department of the General Hospital, and to this day I can recall the great pleasure I felt at the kindly letter I received in acknowledgement, the first of a great many he wrote to me, always in the same sympathetic way. I did not meet him socially until 1878, when I was in London with Dr. George Ross. I sent our cards in one day as he was making the rounds' at Guy's. I was surprised that he left the bedside group with such rapidity after receiving our cards, but he rushed up to us and with some embarrassment, and with his eyes twitching, asked, 'For Heaven's sake, do either of you speak French?! He was struggling with an exceedingly inquisitive professor from Bordeaux, and fortunately Dr. Ross was able to act as intermediary. We spent a delightful evening at his house, and thereafter it was my habit, on visits to London, always to call upon him.

"Few men in the profession had a longer or better innings. With his death snaps the last link between the old medicine and the new, the link which united the profession with the famous clinicians of the early part of the last century: Bright, Addison, and Hodgkin. Wilks may be said to have stood sponsor to both Addison and Hodgkin, and his best work was probably in helping to clearly define the diseases described by them. He illustrated the advantages and disadvantages of approaching clinical medicine through the dead-house. Knowing disease thoroughly, he became a great diagnostician, but his training fostered the therapeutic nihilism into which he, Gull, and many of his contemporaries were driven, and for which, when we think of the vagaries of those days, we have to be greatly thankful. He was a frank, outspoken man, whose yea was yea, and nay, nay, to students and patients alike. . "