

OSLER LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

McGILL UNIVERSITY, MONTREAL, CANADA

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CHINESE TRANSLATIONS OF WESTERN MEDICAL TEXTBOOKS



uring a visit to the Osler Library of McGill University of October 25th, 1974, Professor Donald Bates showed me a Chinese translation of Osler's *The Principles and Practice of Medicine* (*Bibl. Osl.* 3560). With it was correspondence between Osler and the translator, Dr. Philip B. Cousland, M.B., C.M., Edinburgh, who was a medical missionary in China.

The translation of Western medical texts into Chinese is of special interest because it was a principal program of the medical missionaries and an important step in the introduction of Western medicine to China. It was linked to the determination of the missionaries that Chinese should be the medium for bringing Western medicine to China because it was the language of the people. At the same time there were major difficulties because medical and scientific terms in Chinese were essentially non-existent.

The earliest translations were of sections of the Holy Bible into Chinese in the early seventh century by Nestorian missionaries. Those discovered include the Sermon on the Mount, works from the prophet Isaiah, and several other quotations from the Gospels. John de Montecorvino, a Franciscan, is said to have translated the New Testament and the Psalter into Chinese during his years in China, 1294-1330.

Credit for the first complete translation of the Bible goes to Robert Morrison, 1782-1834, of the London Missionary Society, who, after education in divinity, had walked the wards in an abbreviated medical course at St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London. Morrison completed a translation of the entire Bible to Chinese in 1819, and it was printed at the Chinese press which he had established in Malacca.

Benjamin Hobson, M.B., M.D., London, 1839, a missionary of the London Missionary Society, 1847-56, was the pioneer compiler of medical texts. In 1851 he completed a textbook of anatomy and physiology drawn from a number of sources which was the first publication by a physician of a text based on Western medicine.

Hobson was succeeded as the chief compiler of medical texts by John Glasgow Kerr, M.D., of the American Presbyterian Mission at the Canton Hospital. Kerr compiled and translated thirty-four volumes of texts into Cantonese on a wide range of medical and surgical subjects between 1855 and 1901 – medicine, ophthalmology, pathology, derma-

On October 25th, 1974, Dr. John Z. Bowers delivered a lecture to McGill medical students on some aspects of the history of medicine in China. At that time the Editorial Committee asked Dr. Bowers to write an article for the *Osler Library Newsletter*. His contribution appears here. The members of the Editorial Committee are grateful to Dr. Bowers and readers of the *Newsletter* will share their gratitude.

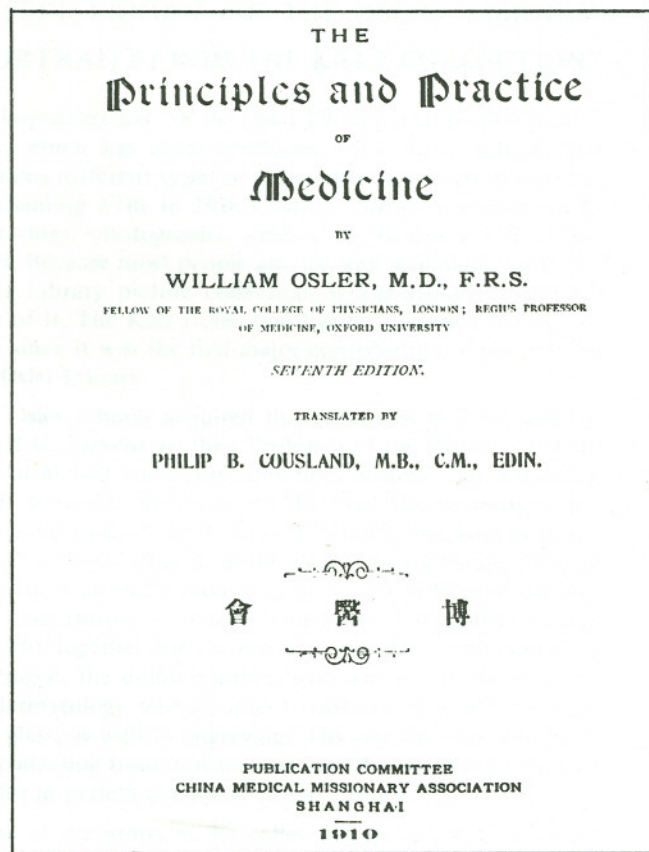
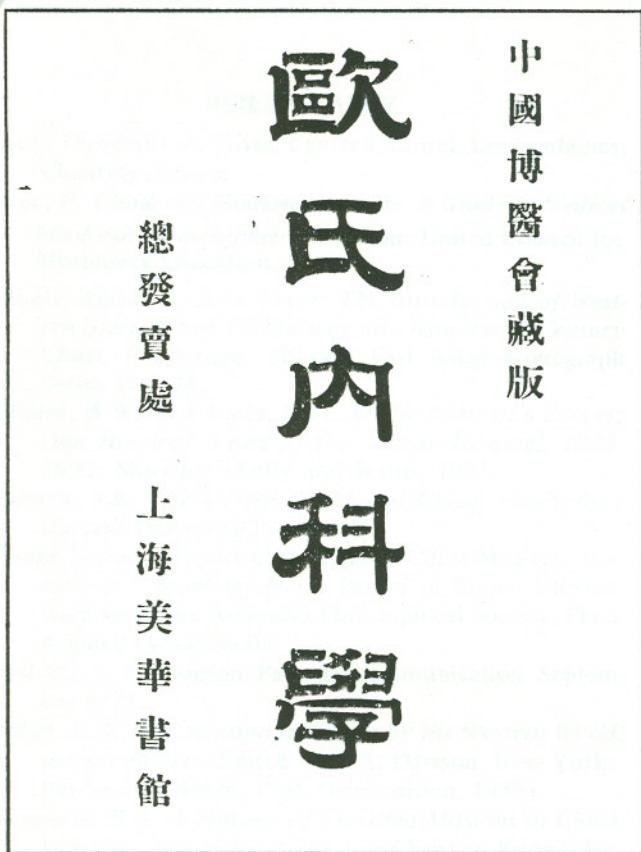
tology, pharmacology, obstetrics, diseases of children, and bandaging.

Dr. P.B. Cousland of the English Presbyterian Mission and a founding member of the Chinese Medical Missionary Association (CMMA) in 1886, was an early voice in launching the translation program of the Association. In 1897 he urged the Educational Committee of the Association to arrange the preparation of an authentic series of medical textbooks with a special translator. His proposal was adopted and by 1900 translations of *Textbook of Ophthalmology* by Norris and Oliver and Ira Remsen's *Textbook of Chemistry* had been completed by James Boyd Neal, M.D., of the American Presbyterian Mission at Tsinanfu, later Shantung Christian University Medical School. The Association program soon became the major such effort in China. The Association's Terminology Committee also compiled an English-Chinese *Lexicon of Medical Terms*.

A list of translations under the auspices of the CMMA, 1911-13, includes Osler's *The Principles and Practice of Medicine*, seventh edition, Shanghai, China Medical Missionary Association Publication Committee, 1910 (*Bibl. Osl.* 3560). The eighth edition (*Bibl. Osl.* 3561) was included in the 1917-20 list. Both translations were by P.B. Cousland. In the Preface to his first translation, Cousland noted that he had not adhered strictly to Osler's text:

Diseases rare or unknown in China have been dealt with somewhat tersely, while others have been taken in whole or in part from Sir Patrick Manson's *Tropical Diseases*. The geographical distribution and incidence in China have been given as far as could be ascertained. Etiological theories and morbid anatomy have as a rule been condensed and such matter as is only appropriate to the West has been omitted.

He also expressed thanks to one Mr. Ch'en Yu T'ing of Swatow whose gift of \$1,000 supported the Chinese assistants. In subsequent editions Cousland added chapters on the major parasitic diseases of China which had been written by Western physicians working there.



Title pages, Chinese and English, of Chinese edition of Osler's *The Principles and Practice of Medicine*, *Bibl. Osl.* 3560.

The 1923-24 report of the CMMA lists a translation of the first volume of the ninth edition of Osler's *Medicine* and the 1926 report states that the translation of the third Chinese edition had been completed. The book was published in Shanghai in 1925 (*Bibl. Osl.* 7742).

Other Western texts that were popular included Gray's *Anatomy*, Haliburton's *Physiology*, Hare's *Therapeutics*, and Holt's *Diseases of Infancy and Childhood*.

Translations were also undertaken outside of the CMMA program, primarily for local use by a medical school. For example, members of the West China Union University Medical School at Chengtu, Szechuan, which was unusually isolated, made several translations. Rawling's *Landmarks and Surface Markings* was translated by William R. Morse of Toronto and McGill. Such translations were submitted for approval to the China Medical Association.

In 1914 an official center for translations was established at Shantung Christian University Medical School, also known as Cheeloo, at Tsinanfu, Shantung Province, under the direction of James Boyd Neal and Randolph T. Shields. Dr. Mary Fulton, president of Hackett Medical College for women, left the school in 1915 to spend her full time in translations at the center.

The translation of medical texts to Chinese was also a contribution of Aurora University at Shanghai, a French Jesuit institution where a medical school was opened in 1914. Aurora also operated a press at its campus in Zicawei, a suburb of Shanghai.

There were printing houses in Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, Limited; and in Tientsin: The Tientsin Press, Ltd. The missionaries preferred to use printing presses in Tokyo because their work was of higher quality.

A principal center for the translation of scientific books was the Kiangnan Arsenal, Shanghai, founded in 1865 where an American missionary, John Fryer, was head of the Translation Bureau for a number of years. Between 1880 and 1896, the Arsenal's Translation Bureau produced seventy-four translations on manufacturing, mathematics, military affairs, geology, anatomy, and botany. Devello Z. Sheffield, another American missionary, wrote Chinese textbooks in psychology, history, and political science at the North China College at Tunghow.

A major early translation was that of William A.P. Martin, an American missionary at Ningpo, who, between 1858 and 1863, translated Henry Wheaton's *Elements of International Law*. It served to introduce international law to the *Tsungli Yamen*, China's new foreign office.

At the Peking Union Medical College, which accepted its first class of premedical students on September 11, 1917, English was the educational medium. This occasioned deep anxiety among the missionaries for they saw it as a threat to their cherished translation program.

We have no evidence from recent visitors to China that the translations by the missionaries are in use today. In all probability they went the way of other reminders of the Western period after the establishment of the People's Republic of China.

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John Z. Bowers,
President, Josiah Macy Jr. Foundation

Editorial Committee for the *Newsletter*: E.H. Bensley, Editor; Ronda Wohl, Associate Editor; Philip Teigen, Librarian; Karl Holeczek, Photography.

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LATEST EXHIBIT OF THE OSLER LIBRARY: "PORTRAITS FROM THE KALZ COLLECTION"

An important part of the Osler Library is its picture collection, which has been developed from many sources and contains different types of material from a portrait series of outstanding 17th to 19th Century European physicians to engravings, photographs, medical illustrations and caricatures. Because most people are not well acquainted with the Osler Library picture collection, it was decided to exhibit part of it. The Kalz Collection has been chosen for exhibition since it was the first major contribution of portraits to the Osler Library.

The Osler Library acquired this collection in 1958 and Dr. Lloyd G. Stevenson, then Professor of the History of Medicine at McGill University, described it thus: "Dr. Frederick Kalz, Assistant Professor of Medicine (Dermatology), has presented to the Osler Library 175 finely engraved portraits of physicians, dating from the 17th Century to the 19th, all of them beautifully mounted, preserved in large portfolios, and constituting a valuable collection. This collection was brought together for the most part by Dr. Ferdinand Kalz of Prague, the donor's father, who was one of the pioneers of dermatology and an ardent collector of books, pictures and glass, as well as engravings. His son has been adding to the collection from time to time over the years and has given the lot in perfect condition to the Library."

Some of the prints in the collection are very rare, some are works of famous artists, or came from well known publishing houses, and most of them portray the outstanding men of science and medicine of their times. Presenting the whole list of exhibited prints would be too long for this article. But it is worth drawing attention to at least a few especially interesting items: Michel de Nostradamus (1503-1566), whose portrait is engraved by Boulanger; Hermann Boerhaave (1668-1738), portrayed on three different prints; Baron Guillaume Dupuytren (1777-1835), a hand coloured engraving; and the portrait of Napoleon Bonaparte's favourite physician - Jean-Nicolas Corvisart (1755-1821).

Vesna Alinec
Reference and Circulation Assistant
Osler Library

OSLER AND THE EDINBURGH LORD RECTORSHIP

In 1908 William Osler stood as a non-political candidate for the Lord Rectorship of the University of Edinburgh. His opponents were two political candidates, Winston Churchill and George Wyndham. The election was won by Wyndham. Osler collected his materials relating to the contest and had them bound in a volume which is now in the Osler Library (*Bibl. Osl. 7648*). An account of this contest, based largely on the contents of this volume, has been published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 1974, 111: 1341-1346. A limited supply of reprints is available. Those wishing a reprint should send their requests to Dr. E.H. Bensley, Department of the History of Medicine, McGill University, 3655 Drummond Street, Montreal, Quebec, H3G 1Y6.

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