

CUS417/51.27

Paris, May 22 1916

Dear Sir William Osler,

Do you remember writing me in February 1915 that you were sending me Dr. J. William White's book and adding: "That will tickle your peaceful soul. He is, I believe, full of good Quaker blood?"

I see an obituary notice of him in the British Medical Journal of May 20th. 1916, p. 743 with the following lines: "In 1838 he appeared as a principal in the last duel fought in Philadelphia: it was on a quarrel with a congressman as to the kind of uniform that should be worn by a surgeon of the City Troop in which he held a commission." If the above statement is true, it proves that he was strangely false to any Quaker blood he may ever have possessed. William Penn, who faced the Indians unarmed and unharmed for ten years, would turn in his grave with shame at the thought of such a degenerate "Quaker". But it further proves that the opinions of a man who at the age of 38, would expose his own life and that of another to decide whether a uniform should be worn or not, are not worthy of serious consideration.

One wonders if he shot his men and so earned the "right" to wear the uniform!

In the same way, today, Germans are killing us and we are killing Germans, to bring about a peaceful Europe, and you and White and millions of others approve.

Our glorious fellows in the trenches know better and shake hands with the Germans on Christmas Day and would shake hands with them to morrow but, no, the fight-at-home Northcliffes and the fire-eating Bottomleys and Professors on both sides of the Rhine

and of the Channel will not let them.

I am a Pacifist, thank God, and, as I wrote to one of my millionaire patients in New-York, adding to his millions today with shell-contracts, I can face the wounded in this world and the dead in the next and tell them I did my best to save them.

Forgive me - and the enclosed doggerel - but I would die rather than remain silent.

The Young and the Old.

The young man lay in the trenches, in the mud and the blinding rain,

Death in the earth and death in the air, and hunger and cold and pain;

Blood on his hands and blood in his soul, from the murder that could not cease,
And the young man said, while the guns flashed red,

Peace, God give us peace!

The old man sat in ^{the} smoke room, withered and lank and lean,

Far from the hell of the bursting shell, and the sea and ships between;

Safe his old worthless carcase, safe his old worthless life,
A And the old man said, while the young man bled,

War! War to the knifel

Sir William Osler answered a few days later, May 27 1916 as follows:

Dear Warden,

You would, all the same, have loved J. William White. "It passes my ^{simmon} per^{say} mission" as they in the South, how you can be a Pacifist - but many men, many minds!

Yours sincerely

William Osler