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THIS CLIPPING FROM

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MEDICINE

Osler

Among people of mediocre intelligence, Sir William Osler is chiefly remembered today as "the doctor who said that a man at 60 ought to be chloroformed." OSLER RECOMMENDS CHLOROFORM AT SIXTY blared the newspapers of the U. S. and Canada on a certain February morning in 1905. Dr. Osler had delivered an address in Baltimore the night previous. This is what he actually said:

I have two fixed ideas well known to my friends, harmless obsessions with which I sometimes bore them, but which have a direct bearing on this important problem. The first is the comparative uselessness of men above 40 years of age. This may seem shocking, and yet read aright the world's history bears out the statement.

My second fixed idea is the uselessness of men above 60 years of age, and the incalculable benefit it would be in commercial, political and in professional life if, as a matter of course, men stopped work at this age. . . . Whether Anthony Trollope's suggestion of a college and chloroform should be carried out or not I have become a little dubious, as my own time is getting so short.

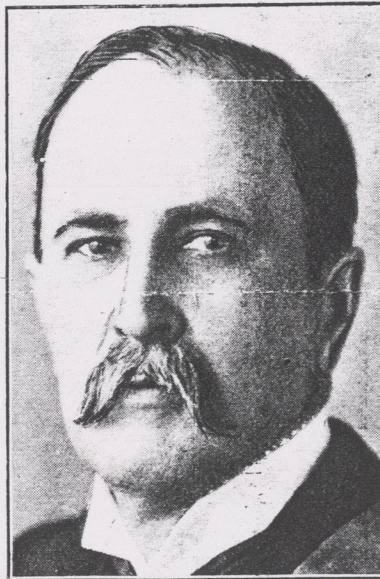
Dr. Harvey Cushing's* 2-volume, 1,371-page *The Life of Sir William Osler*† has been mentioned by critics as "the best biography since Beveridge's *Life of John Marshall*" (Critic Thomas L. Masson) and "an admirable record of a great life, which all physicians, medical students and those who intend to study medicine should read, and with which all habitual readers of biog-

*Harvey Cushing, 56, was graduated from Yale in 1891 and Harvard Medical School in 1895. He immediately began to practice surgery. From 1902 to 1911 he was an associate professor of surgery at Johns Hopkins. Two years later he was made an honorary surgeon of the Royal College of Surgeons. After leaving Johns Hopkins, he went to Harvard where he now is Professor of Surgery. During the War, he served with the Harvard University Medical Unit.

†THE LIFE OF SIR WILLIAM OSLER—Harvey Cushing—2 vols.—Oxford University Press (\$12.00).

raphies should be delighted" (Critic Van Buren Thorne, M.D.).

William Osler began life in 1849 in the wilds of upper Canada, son of a clergyman who had migrated from Cornwall. One of his earliest recollections was of throwing a stone at a pig. "The pig was a long way off, but with the first stone he hit it directly behind the ear and to his chagrin killed it instantly. He would always laugh till the tears came into his eyes at the thought of how 'that old pig looked as he rolled



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SIR WILLIAM OSLER

"Believe nothing that you see in the newspapers"

over on his back with his four legs stiff in the air, and of how the farmer came out and took him by the scruff of his neck straight home. . . ."

He was introduced to the Barrie Grammar School and there threw a cricket ball 115 yards—"a throw never beaten, at least by an amateur."

Later, he attended the University of Toronto (Trinity College) and the McGill Medical School. Eventually he became one of the best-known and certainly best-beloved doctors in England or America. Dr. Cushing's book recounts his successes (principally as a teacher of medicine) at Philadelphia (University of Pennsylvania Medical School), at Baltimore (Johns Hopkins), at Oxford.

He died on Dec. 29, 1919.

Bedside Epigrams:

¶ There are incurable diseases in medicine, incorrigible vices in the ministry, insoluble cases in law.

¶ Probability is the rule of life—especially under the skin. Never make a positive diagnosis.

¶ The mental kidney more often than the abdominal is the one that floats.

¶ Although one swallow does not make a summer, one tophus makes gout and one crescent malaria.

¶ Believe nothing that you see in the newspapers—they have done more to create dissatisfaction than all other agencies. If you

see anything in them that you know is true, begin to doubt it at once.

¶ What John Singer Sargent said when William Osler asked that he paint him in his red Oxford robe:

"No, I can't paint you in that. It won't do. I know all about that red. You know, they gave me a degree down there, and I've got one of those robes. I've left it on the roof in the rain. I've buried it in the garden. It's no use. The red is as red as ever. The stuff is too good. It won't fade. Now, if you could get a Dublin degree? The red robes are made of different stuff, and if you wash them they come down to a beautiful pink. Do you think you could get a Dublin degree?—No, I couldn't paint you in that Oxford red! Why, do you know they say that the women who work on the red coats worn by the British soldiers have all sorts of trouble with their eyes."

¶ What William Osler once wrote (in a letter) of Wilhelm Hohenzollern (who received a degree at Oxford):

He looked a little nervous & did not know just how far away from the Chancellor he should stand. At first he did not look at all happy—as if bored or tired—and he seemed fagged and worried. Lord C. made a singularly felicitous speech, extempore. Only he said it was the Degree of Common, instead of Civil Law. And he made a cold shiver pass round the semi-circle when he said, "and you remember, Sir, the telegram you sent." Everyone felt that it might be an awful break but was relieved when the Ch. added, "about the aquatic contests on the Thames," referring to some incident in the races years ago.

¶ A letter from William Osler to a young lady (a nurse) who had become engaged to marry a physician:

24th [April, 1908]

Dear Miss Price,

Cruel girl! deliberately to divert an innocent young man from the Minervan path! And think of your wasted life! & of the loss to the profession! & the bad example you set to female medical students! & the worse example to young female graduates! & the distrust you have engendered in Hospital Committees! & the suspicion & apprehension such lapses arouse in the minds of the staff! Altogether your conduct seems most reprehensible, & yet! how natural! Wishing you every happiness, Sincerely yours,

WM. OSLER.

¶ A letter to his sister apropos of his knighthood:

Dear Chattie,

You must have had such a shock yesterday morning when you saw Bill's name in the Coronation honour list. . . . I did not know when it was to come out—I thought not till after the coronation, but yesterday before I was out of bed the telegrams began to rain in & there has been a perfect stream—more than 100 from England, & 49 cables, U. S. & Canada; two from India. Letters galore. . . . We really did not need it as much as some poor fellow who has done more but who has not caught the public eye. I am glad for the family. I wish Father & Mother had been alive & poor B.B. & Nellie. It is wonderful how a bad boy (who could chop off his sister's finger) may fool his fellows if he once gets to work. . . . Your affec bro.

"SIR BILLY"!!!!

¶ What Arthur T. Hadley (President Emeritus of Yale) said:

Well do I remember a couple of hours spent one morning in that study, when each of us ought to have been at work at something else, so that our conversation enjoyed the added flavour which goes with forbidden fruit. It began with Ulrich von Hutten; I have forgotten where it ended. In those two hours of conversation I learned more about medical history and more about the persistence of certain queer traits in human nature than could be got from months of study by the most approved method of research. What he said was like Smollett and Gibbon: Smollett's frankness without his coarseness, and Gibbon's erudition and lucidity without his

conventionality. In talk of this kind I have never met the man who was Osler's equal.

What a comrade of Sir William's son, Revere, said, apropos of his death in August, 1917:

The new ditches half full of water being dug by Chinese coolies wearing tin helmets—the boy wrapped in an army blanket and covered by a weather-worn Union Jack, carried on their shoulders by four slipping stretcher-bearers. A strange scene—the great-grandson of Paul Revere under a British flag, and awaiting him a group of some six or eight American Army medical officers—saddened with thoughts of his father.

What Sir William wrote (in a letter) of Pershing et al.

Pershing with General Biddle and three aides arrived at 10:45, also Colonel Lloyd Griscom with an aide, also Mr. Hoover with a Captain Somebody; three big U. S. Army cars. Also an orderly to polish up the General—you would have laughed to see the blue room and your bathroom. Twice during the day General Pershing was brushed and polished. It was a very cold morning and I had a nice wood fire in the drawing-room over which they all clung gratefully. There were sandwiches, coffee and drinks in the dining-room and they had a good meal as they had left town at eight o'clock. Nancy [Astor] arrived in the midst of it, and kissed the General affectionately and said: "Do let's dance; you are the best dancer in the American Army." We dressed the degree people up in scarlet gowns and velvet hats, and all went down in cars; Wanda had a seat with me. It was really a wonderful sight. Lord Curzon was gorgeous. The Prince did not come, but the degree was given in absentia. Pershing had a splendid reception, as did Mr. Hoover; but Haig was the hero, I never heard such a racket. Joffre looks old and sad; worn out, I fancy.

Epidemics

Last week, the Epidemiological Report of the League of Nations Secretariat announced the progress of contagious diseases during the past year. Epidemics this spring have been slight. Though measles are on the up, smallpox is less prevalent in the U. S. and Canada than ever before. Diphtheria has increased in Western and Central Europe; influenza in Sweden, in Denmark. The incidence of typhus remains unusually low throughout Eastern Europe.

Phthisis Serum

Certain medical members of the British Parliament returned to London, last week, to murmur about a serum treatment for tuberculosis which they had gone to Geneva to investigate—the invention of one Dr. Henry Spahlinger. On the streets of Geneva, they said, posters were displayed announcing the sale of Dr. Spahlinger's research station if his debts were not paid. Despite this, he has rejected an offer of £250,000 for his serum from a pharmaceutical manufacturing firm, because he feared the serum would be exploited beyond the means of the poor. The medical M. P.'s reported that evidence had been referred to them which satisfactorily supported the claim that 80% of 400 apparently hopeless cases of tuberculosis had been cured by the Spahlinger serum. They recommended an appeal to the public for £100,000 with which to test the serum in England.

Doctor Shortage

The average age of doctors in the U. S. is 52. As death comes to all men,

so it will come at last to these, and then there will be very few to take their places. So, last week, declared Dr. William Allen Pusey, onetime (1923-24) President of the American Medical Association, in a pamphlet published by



DR. WILLIAM ALLEN PUSEY

He gave his reasons

the Association. He gave his reasons—the expense and difficulty of a modern medical education makes it impossible for poor men to become doctors. Said he: "The minimum requirements 25 years ago were that the student should be 21 years old, have attended three years of medical school. . . . Now entrance requirements include three years of college; the medical course is five years, including one year of hospital . . . an expense of \$8,000 to \$10,000. . . . It will be difficult to get graduates, even more difficult to get graduates to go to rural districts. . . . We are not now producing men to do the ordinary service of medicine for the ordinary people. . . . midwives taking the place of physicians. . . . death certificates marked 'no physician attending.' . . ."

Money Back

Dr. William Allen Pusey (see above) was recently heckled by one Alexander Marky, editor of *Pearson's Magazine*, who demanded that, in order to make the American Medical Association "worthy of its true mission," the following motions should be introduced at the next A. M. A. convention:

1) If an operation is unsuccessful



why I should discontinue occupying my husband's pulpit. I am doing no more than students who take pulpits but are not ordained ministers. I am not assuming pastoral duties. I shall only preach."

Said President Knobel: "It is true that an unordained person may fill a pulpit. . . ."

Zionists

At Washington, D. C., was held the 28th annual convention of the Zionist Organization of America. Some 1,500 delegates and alternates were present, making the assembly the largest ever held by the American Zionists.

The main purpose of the convention—aside from election of officers—was a movement to enlist the support of all Jews, Zionist and non-Zionist, for the construction of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. The movement received practically unanimous endorsement and called upon the World Zionist Congress, which meets in Vienna in August, to accept non-Zionist aid.

Several friendly criticisms of British administration in Palestine were heard. It was alleged that Britain had not passed a nationality act, which left Jews in Palestine without citizenship privileges; that large tracts of undeveloped land, urgently needed for agricultural purposes, had not been turned over to the Jews.

J. Joyce Broderick, counselor of the British Embassy (representing absent Ambassador Sir Esmé Howard), who received a stirring ovation from the congress, told the delegates that "the difficulties which naturally present themselves to the accomplishment of all you desire will be very quickly over-