

Anderton,
near Chorley,
Lancs.

6 Oct: '19.

Sir William Osler, Bt.,
17, Norham Gardens,
Oxford.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 1st inst.
came to hand yesterday, & I take the
first opportunity to reply. I will enclose
Dr Johnston's address on the card you sent.

It is my fault that your letter
to him of Aug^t 5th has not been replied
to before now, and I send you my very
contrite apologies. When Dr J received
it he was acting as "locum tenens" for
a friend in Bolton, and he sent the

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letter on to me with a request to answer it, as being better acquainted than he with the subject of your question. I was very busy at the time, you were away in Jersey and there seemed no need for hurry, and so I put off writing to a more convenient opportunity. I am always in arrears with a correspondence which is too big for me, and delays are apt to prove dangerous. It was quite a shock to me just now to find how much time has elapsed since your letter came, and I am very much ashamed about it.

For a few years after my visit to W. W. in 1891 I tried to do the best my limited opportunities allowed to bring W's influence to bear on the democratic movement in England through its leaders, & I corresponded with some of its chief

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Speakers and writers. I found them fairly responsive to the social implications of his message and to his personality, but with only ~~only~~ a limited grasp of his real significance, and of the orbic range of his vision. And I think this still remains true. I will enclose, however, a short article of mine about Keir Hardie, which is probably illustrative of W.W.'s influence on many others. And I will also enclose a copy of Bruce Glasier's review of "Visits to W.W.", one passage of which I have marked as indicating the enthusiasm felt for Whitman at one period by some of the Socialist propagandists. Amongst present leaders Ramsay MacDonald

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is one who has been considerably influenced by W. W.

I am not personally acquainted with the younger leaders of today, and do not know to what extent they have come under Whitman's influence. I doubt its amounting to much, though I know of one of them, Ben Sporr, M.P. who is deeply appreciative of W. W.

Only a small minority of the workers themselves take an interest in literature, but I know many in this district who have a truer appreciation of W. than most of the writers about him. And their numbers are increasing. Only last evening two men, practically strangers to me, — one a blacksmith

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and the other a labourer — came a distance of 3 miles to make earnest enquiries from me about him. I have often been sought out by workers of this class, and their interest in & appreciation of W. seem to me more vital than those of any other class.

I am sorry that my answer to your question about Dr. Bucke's Whitman material must be so unsatisfactory.

His family shared none of his literary interests, and after his death all his books & papers were stored away in boxes and apparently remain there still!

So his niece ^{Patric Bucke} told me in a letter a year ~~a~~ two ago. Did you ever meet her?

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We are very pleased to hear of your proposed lectures on W. W. & wish them every success. I shall be glad if I can assist you in any way, or give you any further information.

I have been very much disturbed by Horace Traubel's death, for he was a very dear friend of mine. And I rank his life & work very high.

Of course Wair Mitchell's comment on the first vol of "With W. W. in Camden" has a good deal of justification. The book is not directly biographical, but a record of conversations in which both speakers appear — though Horace kept his own share in these as much in the background as his plan permitted.

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Within the period covered by the conversations a good many other people appear besides Walt & Horace, and amongst them is Dr. Osler. I have read every word of Walt's references to you, and have noted with great pleasure his high regard for you, both as a doctor and as a man. All I know of you justifies it, and I am sure that if I met you my own affection would go out to "the human critter" which with Walt always ranked first. Indeed I think of you affectionately, though I have not met you, & I send you my heartfelt good wishes.

Yours very truly,

J. W. Wallace.