

CUS417/10.2

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Professor Arthur Thomson, F.R.C.S.,
163 Woodstock Road,
Oxford, England.

Dear Professor Thomson:

I have been a little puzzled in regard to the medical examination matters as they are conducted in England: the con-joint Board Examinations versus the University Examinations.

I take it (and you will correct me if my impression is wrong) that examinations are held twice a year at Oxford, Cambridge and Dublin (for the M.B. or M.D.?) and that Examiners from elsewhere conduct (or participate in?) these examinations.

Can you tell me who chooses the Examiners: the Medical Faculty or the Regius Professor? Apparently from Osler's letter he always put these people up for a week at 13 Norham Gardens.

I would like very much to know who the outside men may have been during the years between 1906-1919. Are there any University re-cords easily available from which the list of these annual Examiners might be copied down and sent me?

I would also like to know in what subjects examinations were held; and whether the clinical examinations and those for pre-clinical science subjects were held at the same time.

If you could, without too much trouble, send me some notes in regard to these questions - and perhaps for my convenience answer them on the reverse of this sheet - I would be very greatly obliged.

I have reached 1910 in my story, you will be glad to hear, and hope I may get to the end this fall.

Always sincerely yours,

Harvey Cushing

1 The Royal College Grant diplomas. The University degrees. They have no commission. Both qualify for registration to practice.

2. Examinations for the degree B.M. B.S. are held twice a year, as they are at most universities. As they are arranged matters so that one of the examiners in each of the subjects is an Oxford Graduate in Degree of Medicine. The other examiner (there being two in each subject) is usually a distinguished outsider. (outsider in this sense that he is not an Oxford Graduate or teacher.)

3 The examiners are appointed by a Committee consisting of the Vice-Chancellor, 3 proctors & 3 members appointed by the Board of the Faculty of Medicine. The Regius Professor necessarily necessarily be a member. It is the usual custom here for the external examiners to entertain the external examiners in cases where there is no resident internal examiner. The Regius often entertains the two examiners, but it is no part of his duty to do so. Sir William was very generous in this respect.

4 The names of the examiners are published in the University Calendar. I have not access to them here but will write to Oxford & get them copied out for you.

5 The examination in the pre-clinical & the clinical subjects takes place at Oxford so that it may have two batches of examiners to entertain at or about the same time. This arrangement was in the first instance made so as to prevent a man taking his two examinations, say when he is in a hurry as might have happened in the days gone by. The arrangement still continues.