

COS417/29.1

Radcliffe infirmary
Dr W. Callen

Osler attended the B.M.A. meeting at Oxford in July, 1904, and on that occasion the Honorary D.Sc. of the University was conferred on him, with a few other distinguished members of his profession, among whom was Sir Clifford Allbutt.

He was on the eve of returning to America when he received the offer of the appointment of Regius Professor of Medicine for the University, which he accepted. The appointment was an extremely popular one. One distinguished Oxford Medical Graduate who had attended the B.M.A. meeting at Oxford wrote as follows:-

"The chorus of delight in London is high, the whole English speaking race will be jealous of Oxford"

Osler took up his residence in Oxford in May 1905, and paid his first visit as Regius Professor to the Radcliffe Infirmary on June 2nd.

On June 15 he attended a Meeting of the Staff, when a unanimous resolution was passed that every facility

for teaching should be given him, both in the Ward and in the Out-Patient department if he wished; and that for purposes of instruction all patients should be at his disposal. From his first visit to the Infirmary up to his very last, his relationship with the Staff, the Resident Medical Officers, the Matron, Sisters and Nurses was of the very happiest kind. Many of the patients realized as he taught in the Wards that he was a Doctor who could and did speak with unusual knowledge and authority and counted themselves fortunate in that they benefited by his life experience and knowledge; while the children soon got to welcome him as a warm personal friend.

Every Sunday and Tuesday morning he gathered round him a number of medical students and a considerable following of Medical Practitioners, and he succeeded in the very difficult task of

keeping both sections deeply interested in his clinical teaching. In addition to his clinical teaching he took a very deep interest in all matters connected with the Hospital. He acted as Chairman at all Meetings of the Staff. It was on these occasions one soon learnt what ^awonderful peace-maker he was, a personal grievance or feeling of irritation was at once dissipated by a light touch on humour on the Chairman's part.

From the outset he took a special interest in the Tuberculosis Question, and was most anxious that the Hospital should be closely connected with any scheme which had for its object the active treatment of Tuberculosis.

In spite of his multifarious engagements he made a great effort to attend the meetings of the local medical societies, The Oxford Medical Society and The Oxford Division of the British Medical Association. His ripe experience and extensive

knowledge added enormously to the popularity and value of these meetings. The British Medical Association found in Osler a very strong supporter, as he urged that all medical men, consultants and general practitioners alike, should join an association of this type.

His generosity was unbounded, and such societies as the Medical Benevolent and Epsom College will feel the loss of his support. When during the war the Auxiliary R.A.M.C. Benevolent Fund was **started** Sir William became an annual subscriber, gave a liberal donation towards the formation of this fund, and became a trustee; in addition to this he induced one or two of his friends to make very generous donations to this fund. His kindness and sympathy to any of his medical friends or their families when ill health fell on them, it would be difficult to ~~adequately~~ ^{adequately,} describe; the writer knows of many instances in which he put

himself to the greatest inconvenience to visit and cheer and sympathise with a sick friend. He was, without the slightest doubt, naturally the kindest and most sympathetic man the writer has ever known.

One other characteristic of Osler's should be noted. If he thought a particular line of action was the right one, he forthwith adopted it; he never waited to see what others were saying or were going to do. In these days we want more men of this type, who are not afraid to speak out and who are quite ready to support a line of action if they are convinced it is a right one, however unpopular it may be.

