

Letter
(script.)

E.L. Trudeau to Dr. Osler.
June 24th (1910).

In bed
Saranac Lake.

Dear Dr. Osler,

I have just read your graceful and beautiful tribute to me and to my work in the "Journal of the Out of Door Life". That you kept two of my letters written long ago, that you placed my 25th Annual Report in that temple of Fame which I would prize above others, your favourite book shelf, and that you have written such words of me! - I have been in the Grip of the Tiger and in bed now for five weeks, but if my body is harrassed and shrivelled by disease my Soul is full of joy and after reading these wonderful tributes in the Out-of-Door Life I feel I must get on my feet once more for life with such friends cannot but be worth living under most any conditions!

Most sincerely your friend,
E.L. Trudeau.

*Edward S. Trudeau - an Appreciation -
Journal of Out door Life June 1910*

How true sometimes is the paradox of the Gospel that to save his life a man must lose it! Out of the depths, - "from our desolation only may the better life begin." In that best of all medical autobiographies, Jugenderinnerungen eines alten Aertztes, Professor Kussmaul tells the story of his student days and of the happy beginning of a busy life as district physician in the Black Forest - plenty of work, good health, and a happy home with wife and children. Then the overwhelming disaster - sudden paraplegia, a long struggle in adverse circumstances, and a final victory wrought out of the very elements of defeat. Would that the story were more common! And yet how often does ill health, the bridle of Theages, as Plato calls it, concentrate a man's resources and bring out qualities of work, the fruits of the spirit, which may be missed in the hurly burly of the work-a-day world. The issue is not as a rule a man of affairs, but rather the fiery soul of the artist or poet "fretting the pigmy body to decay." Of all the blows of circumstance that may help to temper a man's metal chronic illness is the most uncertain in its effects. Those fortunate ones win out who early learn to work in limitations which seem intolerable to the robust, who wish to take the kingdom of heaven by violence. The late W.K. Brooks told me that he attributed any success he may have had to the recognition of a permanent (congenital) weakness of

the heart: and surely of his Chelonian race any swift-footed son of Thetis might be proud! Now and then men are fortunate enough to overcome the worst foes encountered in the battle of life - chronic ill health, and an enforced residence in a paralysing environment. The attitude of mind so splendidly expressed in Henley's verse "Out of the night that covers me," scoffs at the menace of the years, and unafraid, with unbowed head, the happy possessor of the unconquerable soul of this sort feels that

It matters not how strait the gate
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul.

And this is the lesson of Edward Trudeau's life - the lesson of a long and successfully fought campaign. An implacable foe, entrenched within his own citadel, has been often brought to terms of truce, never wholly conquered.....

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.....I like now to admit to the select company on my shelves only the literature that has a personal interest to me, or epoch-making works of the masters of medicine. When the 25th annual report of the Sanitarium appeared I had it bound, and it reposes in my library between a work of Laennec, and the story of the early days of the Johns Hopkins Hospital. I wrote on the fly-leaf "A triumph of optimism! This shows what a badly crippled man may do single handed, once let him gain the confidence of his brethren, medical and lay. Trudeau had the good fortune to be made of the stuff that attracts to himself only the best, as a magnet picks out iron. Of an unselfish, sympathetic disposition, he secured the devotion of his patients, to whom he was at once a tower of strength and a splendid example."

Trudeau died Nov. 18 1910

his tribute in Lancet Nov. 21st