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(To Leonard L. Mackall)

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FROM THE REGIUS PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE, OXFORD.

Oct. 3, 1910.

Dear Mackall:

Where are you? Why have you not sent me word when you were coming? I hope to goodness you have not been and gone while we were away.

Sincerely yours,

W^m Osler.

P.S. Your letter has just come. Could you not come down on Friday? I have got a rather busy week before that, having to be in Cambridge.

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THE COST OF SANITATION IN THE
TROPICS.

O.S., 1910

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In the report on the measures taken against malaria in the Lahore Cantonment, which I have just received from the authors, Messrs. Nathan, Thornhill, and Rogers, the conclusion is reached that anti-malarial operations, such as have been carried out so successfully in other countries, cannot be readily adopted in India, chiefly on account of the great cost. Panama is cited in illustration. The statement is made on the authority of Colonel Macpherson: "That the total cost of sanitary and medical measures amounted to two millions of dollars per annum, or about a tenth of the total annual expenditure on the Canal works." Colonel Gorgas has recently denied this statement. His paper is published in the *Gulf States Journal of Medicine and Surgery* (July, 1910), and as it is, perhaps, not very accessible, the following quotations will be of interest. "The ordinary man in speaking of the Sanitary Department has in mind a department such as the Health Department of New York. Besides performing such functions as the Health Department of New York performs, the Sanitary Department on the Isthmus cares for all the sick, both in the hospitals and at dispensaries, administers the national quarantine, does the street cleaning and garbage collecting, fills in drains and reclaims waste lands, pays the salaries of some fifteen ministers of the Gospel, cares for all the cemeteries, does a general undertaking and embalming business for some 80,000 people, and besides all this, pays directly to the Engineering Department about \$200,000 per year. Up to July 1st, 1909, Congress has appropriated \$7,927,840 for the Department of Sanitation on the Isthmus. Of this \$7,927,840 appropriated for the Sanitary Department, Congress has taken away and given to the construction department \$938,827. This leaves the total appropriation for the Sanitary Department \$6,989,013. Considering the 62 months covered by the period from May 4th, 1904, to July 1st, 1909, this gives us an appropriation at the rate of \$112,726 per month. This would give us a yearly appropriation for the first years since the Sanitary Department has been organised of \$1,352,712."

"Taking the fiscal year 1908 and 1909, we find that one-fourth of our expenditures were for sanitation. Apply the same rates to the average yearly appropriation, \$1,352,712 divided by four gives us \$338,178 as the annual appropriation for sanitation. Considering our average population for the past five years as one hundred thousand, we have the *per capita* appropriation for sanitation during the same period as three dollars and thirty-eight cents *per capita* per year, or 28c. per month."

"When we consider the great changes for the better that have been accomplished by the expenditure, I think that we will all agree that it has been very economically accomplished. Such expenditure is certainly well within the means of any tropical community."

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

WM. OSLER.

University of Oxford, Oct. 3rd, 1910.