

## THE SPRINGFIELD DAILY

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## A GUEST OF SIR WILLIAM OSLER.

*To the Editor of The Republican:—*

In the article, "Abroad With Jane," printed in the October number of Scribner's magazine, are a few sentences (p 547) on Sir William Osler that are illustrative of the modern literary man's treatment of his host. Though Sir William Osler is here disguised as "Sir Richard Holter," the allusion to Ewelme makes perfectly clear to readers that the Regius professor of medicine is meant:—

But, as I said, people are apt to have erroneous ideas about what they are really doing and to lose sight of the end in the intensity of their attention to the process. There was Sir Richard Holter, whom Jane and I visited over Sunday at Oxford. I would not dare assume that Sir Richard has delusions about anything, but, whatever he thinks, he gives out that he is a professor in Oxford university. Well, he is; and he does profess a little, I believe—does light instruction, as you might say, two or three hours a week. But his great line is the direction of human life. I understand he doctors a little on the side, and I have heard it maintained that he is "some doctor," though I could not have heard that in England, for I am sure no self-respecting British person would so express himself. But Sir Richard comes out to the States now and again, and I may have heard it there. I went about with him for a day and a half, and wherever he went he was always directing life, and wherever he touched it, it seemed to go lighter and more blithely.

It was not term time when we were in Oxford and the studious youths were not there, but a dirigible war balloon dropped in about the time we did, and camped on a college common over Sunday, and that filled up the place a little. I was glad to see a dirigible, though it seemed a mighty modern bird to be resting in the grounds of Oxford university. Sir Richard showed me the Bodleian, and its new and admirable device for storing books. It had too many—all the great libraries have too many—and instead of crowding in an enormous library to hold them it dug out a large hole under a venerable building nearby, put stacks in it, connected it by a sutable passage, and there they can have a million books or so, available, harmless and inoffensive to the landscape.

Next day he took us to church in Christ church cathedral—a duodecimo cathedral, but very worshipful—and afterward showed us many things—rooms, halls, chapels, windows, more libraries, and the like, venerable and edifying. And after lunch, with one of the kind and handsome ladies of his family he motored us 12 or 14 miles over to Ewelme, where about 500 years ago, when our forebears were still inhabitants and part owners of England, the earl and countess of Suffolk founded a "hospital" for the care of a dozen or two old people and built a church beside it. There it all is, as they left it, and the countess's effigy, very handsome and perfect, on her tomb in the church. Sir Richard directs the life of the hospital ex officio as one of the details of his Oxford occupation.

So Sir William Osler "does light instruction two or three hours a week," he "doctors a little on the side," he is said to be "some doctor." If this were merely conversation in the smoking room of a steamer there would be nothing particularly objectionable about it, but as a part of a magazine article written by one who represents himself as having recently enjoyed the hospitality of an Oxford professor and his "handsome ladies," it is, I venture to say, in execrable taste. B. J. E.

Williamstown, October 3, 1914.