

# OSLER LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

McGill University, Montreal, Canada

No. 58 – June 1988

**Lloyd Grenfell Stevenson**  
(June 2, 1918 - March 20, 1988)

**I**t has been said that the Osler Library of the History of Medicine is a jewel in the crown of McGill. Bequeathed by Sir William Osler, polished to international renown by W.W. Francis, this precious gift was fittingly installed in its present setting by yet another contributor to McGill's academic riches, Lloyd Grenfell Stevenson.

It was in his native city, London, Ontario, that Lloyd received his B.A., in 1940, and his M.D., in 1944, from the University of Western Ontario. Two years later he had become a lecturer in the History of Medicine and had produced a major biography of another doctor who also found his first inspiration in London, Sir Frederick Banting. Thus Lloyd had launched his career as an historian even before he went to the Institute of the History of Medicine at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore to obtain his Ph.D. in that subject in 1949. After a post-doctoral year abroad, in the other London, Lloyd returned to Western as a Markle Scholar. In 1954 he left Western for McGill where he became Associate Professor, Honorary Librarian of the Medical Library, and Assistant to W.W. Francis in the Osler Library.

Lloyd's career continued its rapid rise. When Principal Cyril James asked him to become the Dean of the Medical Faculty in 1956, he was, at 38, the youngest person ever to succeed to that office, a post which he held concurrently with that of Professor of the History of Medicine until his departure for Yale, seven years later.

It was during this time that Lloyd oversaw the planning of the McIntyre Medical Sciences Building, conceived and found funding for the physical transfer of the Osler Library from the Strathcona Building to its new quarters, added the Wellcome Camera, and provided the physical facilities to house a department of the history of medicine. Later, both as recognition for his scholarship, and as an act of gratitude, McGill bestowed upon him the degree of Doctor of Letters, *honoris causa*, at a special convocation that marked the official opening of the McIntyre Building

in March, 1966.

After a brief but notable period at Yale, both as Professor of the History of Medicine, and as editor of the *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, Lloyd moved once again, in 1968, this time to Baltimore, as the William H. Welch Professor of the History of Medicine, editor of the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, and Director of the institute that had awarded him his doctorate less than two decades before. Here he remained as one of North America's best-known editors, teachers, and writers on the history of medicine until his retirement in 1983.



Throughout this period, and after, Lloyd continued to take an active interest in the McGill department whose foundations he had built, and in the Osler Library on whose Board of Curators he remained. Through his presence at meetings of the Board, Lloyd's associates at McGill were furnished with an annual reminder of the sense of humour, gift with the English language, and wide ranging intellectual interests that were the quintessential Lloyd to all who knew him.

Besides his book on Banting, Lloyd

The leading article in this issue is an appreciation of Lloyd Grenfell Stevenson presented to meetings of the McGill University Senate and Medical Faculty. It was prepared by Dr. Don G. Bates, Professor of the History of Medicine, Department of Humanities and Social Studies in Medicine, McGill University.

In 1973, the Editorial Committee of the *Newsletter* asked Lloyd Stevenson, then at The Johns Hopkins University, to write an account of the Osler Library's translation from its old home in the Strathcona Medical Building to the new McIntyre Medical Sciences Building, with the negotiations which had led to the Wellcome Trust grant and to the addition of the Wellcome Camera. Dr. Stevenson agreed and his account appeared as the leading article in the *Osler Library Newsletter*, no. 14, October 1973

Stevenson left a legacy of writings that have enriched the field in which he spent his professional life: works on the history of lead poisoning, infectious disease, diabetes, the anti-vivisection movement, and Nobel prize winners in medicine, to name but a few of the topics that stimulated his inquiring mind. But Lloyd's greatest gift was the giving of himself to all those, in many countries, whom he regarded as his friends.

One of these, the distinguished historian Erwin H. Ackerknecht, paid him this retirement tribute: "May age be good to you who have been so good to the aged!" But it was not to be. Illness detracted from what should have been a happy and fulfilling retirement. Then, while on vacation in Florida, he died of complications after a car accident, at the age of sixty-nine. With his passing, McGill has lost a loyal and devoted friend.



### Sir William Osler: An Annotated Bibliography with Illustrations

Of Maude Abbott's many publications, one of the best known and most used has been her *Classified and Annotated Bibliography of Sir William Osler's Publications*, of which the second and final edition appeared in 1939, almost fifty years ago. Additional items have been brought to light since then, for example through W.W. Francis' handwritten annotations in the Osler Library's copy of Maude Abbott's bibliography and by the entries in previous issues of the *Osler Library Newsletter* (nos. 35, 39, 44). A completely revised up to date version profusely and attractively illustrated and including relevant supplementary material is very welcome and this has been supplied by Richard L. Golden and Charles G. Roland (eds.) *Sir William Osler: An Annotated Bibliography with Illustrations*, published in San Francisco by Jeremy Norman & Co. in 1987. A detailed description of the book is contained in Issue #1 of *Norman Publishing News*, Fall 1987. Enquiries should be sent to Norman Publishing, Jeremy Norman & Co. Inc., 442 Post Street, San Francisco, California, 94102-1579.

### Osler Day - 1988

Osler Day this year falls on Wednesday, November 2nd. The Osler Lecturer will be Dr. Lewis Thomas, well known medical essayist and President Emeritus of the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Centre.

As is customary, the Osler Banquet will be held on the evening of Osler Day. Dr. Thomas will be the honoured guest at the banquet and will respond to questions from the floor about his Osler Lecture delivered that afternoon.

### James Gilbert Turner (1905-1987)

A native of New Brunswick, James Gilbert Turner graduated in Medicine from McGill University in 1932, practised in Fredericton until 1940 when he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force and, after six years there, returned to civilian life to pursue post-graduate studies in hospital administration in New York.

Dr. Turner became Executive Director of the Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal in 1947 and served in that demanding post for 22 years, demanding under any circumstances but especially so because during that period the Hospital underwent a massive reconstruction. In 1970, Dr. Turner retired to Victoria, British Columbia.

In his retirement, he showed a keen interest in the Osler Library and was a generous annual contributor to the Friends. His final contribution to the Osler Library has been a bequest of \$20,000. Dr. Turner died Decem-

ber 2nd, 1987 at his home in Victoria. He will be sadly missed by his many admirers, of which the Editor of this *Newsletter* was one.

E.H.B.

### An Outstanding Acquisition: 22,500 Medical Theses From France

Through the efforts of Dr Eric Ormsby, Director of Libraries at McGill University and a member of the Osler Library's Board of Curators, the Library has recently acquired a collection of 22,500 French medical theses from the nineteenth century. As is customary in European universities to this day, these theses were printed. The collection purchased by McGill from Librairie Slatkine in Geneva comprises approximately 1,056 bound volumes of these publications.

Then, as now, the thesis prepared for the degree of Doctor of Medicine in a French university was not intended to be an extensive or original scholarly work. Most of the theses in this collection are between 20 and 100 pages in length, and concern such mainstream medical problems as diagnosis, treatment, and surgical technique. For that very reason, however, they are of extraordinary value for the historian of medicine interested in the character and progress of medical education, and in the scope of medical inquiry as it touched the average graduate. This social-historical approach to the history of medicine underlies the research of Prof. George Weisz of the Department of Humanities and Social Studies in Medicine, author of numerous studies of French universities, medical education, and the formation of the French medical elite. This new acquisition provides valuable primary material not only for Prof. Weisz's own work, but for the research of his graduate students in the new M.A. programme in medical history. Moreover, the theses complement the many hundreds of rare and historic works on the social dimensions of medicine in France purchased by the Osler Library over the past eight years with funds provided by collections development grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. With the addition of this outstanding collection of theses, there is no doubt that the Osler Library stands as one of the finest historical resources in North America for the study of French medicine in this crucial and formative period.

The collection's scholarly importance lies in its extent, but many of the individual theses are of considerable interest in themselves. The theses of such giants of 19th century French medicine as Rene' Laennec (the inventor of the stethoscope), the physiologist and pathologist P.-C.-A. Louis, the cardiologist Bouillaud, the psychiatrist Royer-Collard

(who treated the Marquis de Sade at Charenton), and Dominique Jean Larrey, the eminent military surgeon of the Napoleonic armies, can be found in these volumes. However, the topics chosen by quite undistinguished medical graduates will also stimulate the historian's curiosity. For example, the new interest in preventive medicine and public health as applied to building standards is reflected in Eduard Gaud's *De l'aération et de la sédentarité dans les lycées d'internes* (1889), and the broadening role of research in medicine finds an echo in *Sur la méthode statistique et son emploi dans les sciences médicales*, submitted by Marc Pierrot in 1897. E. Hebert's thesis entitled *Une année médicale à Dagana, Sénégal* (1880) bespeaks the impact of France's colonial empire, while the bloody collapse of another empire is reflected in Guillaume Despax's 1816 thesis on *Considérations médicales sur la marche des troupes*. The names of the students who submitted theses reveal a considerable foreign element, which witnesses to the prestige of French medicine at this period. Moreover, from the 1870's onward, one sees a number of women writing theses; one of these, Caroline Schultze, chose as her subject *La femme-médecin au dix-neuvième siècle* (1888).

This monumental and multi-faceted collection of French medical theses, in conjunction with books, journals and microforms already at the Osler Library, will provide scholars and students of medicine in 19th century France with a extraordinarily rich archive. The McGill Library System is proud and profoundly gratified to have acquired such a valuable and appropriate complement to the Osler Library's resources for medical-historical research.

Faith Wallis

### Osler Library Fellows For 1988

Osler Library Fellowships for the year 1988 have been awarded to two medical historians, Dr J. B. Lyons and Dr Patrice Delavenne, who are working on very different, yet equally innovative research projects.

Dr J. B. Lyons, Archivist, College Historian, and Professor of Medical History at the the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, has published numerous biographical studies of Irish doctors. He is particularly interested in the connection of medicine with literature, and has explored this theme in relation to Oliver Goldsmith, Oliver St. John Gogarty, and James Joyce. Using extensive original materials at the Osler Library, he will now undertake a study of the Irish-Canadian physician and dialect poet William Henry Drummond.

Dr Patrice Delavenne of Ville-Marie, Quebec, is a psychiatrist and historian, a found-



ing member and councillor of the *Société internationale d'histoire de la psychiatrie et de la psychanalyse*, and a member of the editorial board of its journal, *Frénésie*. His special expertise in 19th century French psychiatry is the foundation for an ambitious bibliographical project: a catalogue of psychiatric literature from 1799 to the period of the First World War. The Fellowship will enable him to make substantial progress on the first phase of the bibliography, covering writings in French.

The Library is gratified to be able to support two research enterprises of this quality, and particularly so in that they represent branches of scholarship to which Osler was personally devoted: the study of the relationship of medicine and literature, and historical medical bibliography.

#### Osler and Psychiatry: A Symposium and an Exhibit

The American Psychiatric Association held its 141st annual meeting in Montreal from May 7-13, 1988, and the Association's History and Library Committee, chaired by Dr Garfield Tourney of the University of Mississippi, organized a special workshop on Sir William Osler and psychiatry. The workshop was "special" in many ways. While the main conference unfolded at the *Palais des Congrès* downtown, the Osler workshop was held in the McIntyre Medical Building, and later adjourned to the Library itself. Moreover, while the title of "workshop" suggests a somewhat informal, and perhaps prosaic and practical event, this workshop turned into a full-fledged symposium. "Workshop" also connotes a small group of serious and committed investigators, but this workshop -- rather to the surprise of the organizers -- attracted over 300 participants to hear the papers and later to visit the Library for a champagne reception, a screening of "Willie -- A Dream", and the vernissage of a special exhibit.

The metamorphosis of the "workshop" is largely due to the enthusiastic response of a number of psychiatrists to Dr Tourney's initiative, so that what was originally envisioned as a small panel discussion grew into a programme of six addresses. Dr Tourney himself gave a substantial introduction to Osler's life and ideas. He was followed by Dr Charles Cahn, Associate Professor of Psychiatry at McGill and former chairman of the historical section of the Canadian Psychiatric Association, who spoke on "Osler and Canadian Psychiatry"; Dr Cahn's close association with the Douglas Hospital gave him access to archival sources illuminating Osler's participation in the foundation of that institution. Stanley W. Jackson, Professor of Psychiatry and the History of Medicine at Yale explored the question of "Osler and Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*", while Paul R.

McHugh, Henry Phipps Professor of Psychiatry at Johns Hopkins, analysed Osler's role in the creation of the Phipps Clinic. Dr Haskell F. Norman, a psychoanalyst from Ross, California, was unable to attend, but his essay on Osler's ambiguous relations with Freud and the psychoanalytic movement was read by Dr Tourney. Finally, Dr Faith Wallis addressed the subject of books of psychiatric interest in the *Bibliotheca Osleriana*.

Many of the books described by Dr Wallis were on display in the exhibition cases outside the Library. They not only expose the intense debates and curious turns in the development of an exceptionally complex medical specialty, but they also reveal something of Osler's rather ambivalent attitudes towards psychiatry. The perennial question of whether mental disorder was an organic ailment or a "sickness of the soul" has always drawn psychiatry into the regions of philosophy and theology. Osler, as a minister's son with some deep and unresolved conflicts about the relationship of medicine to religion, was especially attracted to these borderline areas, and his library is extraordinarily rich in Renaissance and early modern works on melancholy, witchcraft, hypnotism, faith-healing, and dreams. He was also deeply interested in the reform of mental institutions, especially the history of the "no restraint" movement which emerged in England after the foundation of the York Retreat. What Osler was conspicuously *not* interested in was the etiology, classification and scientific analysis of mental illness: none of the works of the great French alienists are present, and Freud is represented only by *The Interpretation of Dreams* (though it is well known that Osler referred patients to Freud).

Some of the background to this rather personal collection of psychiatric classics was presented in the form of a second exhibit, in the Osler Room, on "Osler and Psychiatry". Osler's early work in neurology had a strong psychiatric undertow: for example, his paper "On the Classification of the Tics or Habit Movements" closes with an interesting discussion of *tic psychique*. Hence it is not surprising to find a chapter on hysteria in *The Principles and Practice of Medicine*, though the analysis and therapy offered might seem shallow and untutored now. Case cards from Osler's private practice reveal a significant number of affective disorders, ranging from a gentleman's "pre-matrimonial neurasthenia" to "hysterical laryngismus with acute maniacal attacks", but his most fascinating record of a psychological case is undoubtedly his personal dream-diary. In the last analysis, however, it is the Osler Library that most clearly proclaims Osler's true attitudes to psychiatry. He professed to disdain philosophy ("Cheerfulness is always breaking in.")

but if one looks closely at his Library, one will find where he concealed his genuine interest and perplexity over the problem of the soul, its origin and fate, and its capacity to perceive truth. It is in his books on mental disorder, and perhaps especially in his splendid collection of editions of Robert Burton, whose *Anatomy of Melancholy* inspired some of Osler's most intriguing reflections on the sickness of the soul.

Faith Wallis

#### Corrections

Two factual errors were made in the account entitled "Dr. Harold Segall Celebrates 90th Birthday" in the February 1988 *Newsletter*. Both are on page 4. "Dr. Segall brought the first ECG machine to Montreal" should have been "Dr. Segall brought the first portable ECG machine to Montreal", and in the reference to Korotkoff, "inflatable cuff" should have been "inflatable cuff and stethoscope".



## Friends of the Osler Library

The appeal to the Friends for the 1987-88 academic year concluded at the end of May. The Library gratefully acknowledges the support it has received from Friends, both old and new, who have responded to the appeal for funds this year. Over the year, 338 Friends have given a total of approximately \$13 500.00. Most of the contributions have come from Friends in Canada and the United States of America. However, very welcome contributions have come also from Argentina, Australia, Belgium, England, the Netherlands, Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany, Switzerland, and the West Indies. The names of Friends whose contributions were received after January 31, 1988 are listed below:

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The appeal for the 1988-89 academic year will be made in the October *Newsletter*.

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