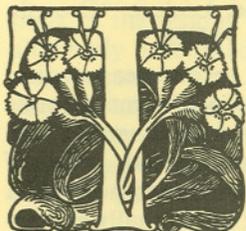


OSLER LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

McGILL UNIVERSITY, MONTREAL, CANADA

No. 28 — JUNE 1978

OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE FRANCIS WING*



HE W.W. FRANCIS WING of the Osler Library was officially opened by Dr. H. Rocke Robertson on the afternoon of Osler Day, April 19th, 1978.

The ceremony was chaired by Dr. Philip M. Teigen, History of Medicine Librarian in charge of the Osler Library.

After welcoming the approximately one hundred guests present, Dr. Teigen introduced the speakers, who were four in number.

The first speaker was Dr. Lloyd G. Stevenson, now William H. Welch Professor of the History of Medicine and Director of the Institute of the History of Medicine, The Johns Hopkins University, and formerly Dean of the Medical Faculty and Professor of the History of Medicine, McGill University. Dr. Stevenson spoke about Dr. W.W. Francis. His delightful address was based largely on his own recollection of Francis.

The second speaker was Dr. H. Rocke Robertson, a former Principal and Vice Chancellor of McGill University, who, at this ceremony, was officiating as President of the Friends of the Osler Library. He opened the Wing in the traditional manner by cutting a ribbon placed across the entrance. Dr. Robertson's address appears in this *Newsletter*.

After the Francis Wing had been officially opened, two speakers followed — Dr. Samuel O. Freedman, Dean of the McGill Medical Faculty and, as such, *ex-officio* Chairman of the Board of Curators of the Osler Library, and Dr. Leo Yaffe, Professor of Chemistry and a Vice Principal of McGill University, representing the Principal and Vice Chancellor, who was unavoidably absent. Their remarks were brief but highly appropriate and, by their presence, they contributed greatly to the dignity and the pleasure of the occasion.

The ceremony was closed by Dr. Philip M. Teigen as chairman and the assemblage invited to partake of refreshments. Perhaps "assemblage" is not an unsuitable word. As already stated, the number attending was approximately one hundred. They included the Curators of the Osler Library, who had held their annual meeting in the morning, and many of the Friends of the Library in addition to their President. Especially welcome were past members of the staff of the Osler Library, at least two of whom came from out of town, and Dr. Marian Francis Kelen, the daughter of Dr. W.W. Francis.

DR. ROBERTSON'S ADDRESS

On behalf of the Friends of the Osler Library, that gallant band of men and women who maintain a most intense interest in the Library and who watch, with the greatest suspicion, every move that its Curators make, may I express approval and delight on the occasion of the opening of the W.W. Francis Wing? All the Friends, I have no doubt, will be pleased on two counts: that Dr. Francis should be honoured and that the accommodations of the Library should be improved.

There is little to be added to what has already been said about Dr. Francis by Dr. Lloyd Stevenson. I would only express an obvious satisfaction that his enormous contributions to the scholarly aspects of this Library are being recognized in this tangible way, as they have been so often in print and speech. No one, I think, would doubt the propriety of the linkage of the names Osler and Francis in this structure, for it is fitting in every respect.

From all that I have heard and know about him I doubt that Dr. Francis had much interest in plans or architecture, and he probably had none in moving books; for in the process of moving, books are not available for study; they are temporarily removed from the world in which he lived and dreamed and wrought so successfully and he would have resented every frustration. Thus, I suspect, he played relatively little part in designing the original Osler Library in the Strathcona Medical Building. Dr. H.S. Birkett, Dr. C.F. Martin, Professor Samuel Whitnall, Mr. Percy Nobbs and Lady Osler took care of that. Indeed we are told that Dr. Francis, by his insistence on perfecting the *Bibliotheca*, did more to delay the move than to enhance the destination. And word has it that when, just after he was nicely settled down after thirty years in Montreal, the awful prospect of having to move again appeared, he responded characteristically by expressing utter dread at the thought, concern that the books should be disturbed and fear that he might not be moved with them. As things turned out he was spared the ordeal.

Dr. Lloyd Stevenson was, I believe, entirely responsible for the imaginative decision to move the Library holubolus, panel by panel, frieze by frieze, to the new site and to wedge it into the neck of the banjo where, if strange shaped rooms were created around its periphery, it fitted well. The concept was brilliant and it is no wonder that Dr. Stevenson was able to persuade the John and Mary R. Markle Foundation to provide funds to assist the move.

For all this and for funds from the Wellcome Trust to expand the Library's collections Dr. Stevenson deserves great credit, and as we rejoice in seeing him return today to participate in Phase Four of the evolution of the Osler Library, we should pay him a most sincere tribute.

The decorated letter on this page is reproduced from *Life and Works of Sir Christopher Wren. From the Parentalia or Memoirs by his Son Christopher*, London and New York, 1903 (Bibl. Osl. 6855).

*For a description of this Wing and reference to the sources of financial support for its construction and furnishing, see the October 1976 and June 1977 issues of the *Osler Library Newsletter*.

The Osler Society of McGill University Report for the academic year 1977-78

It is unfortunate that he was lured away from McGill before his brain-child was born. For a time, a crucial time during which the final decisions about the design had to be made and the actual move effected, the responsibility for steering the Library fell on the shoulders of the late Dr. Francis' assistant, Cécile Desbarats, and she, with her assistants (Betty Wainwright, Elspeth Thomson, Joan Darling and the ever-helpful volunteer Marion Wright), bore the brunt. In this they were tremendously helped by Dr. Wilder Penfield who, as Honorary Osler Librarian, stepped in whenever necessary, as it often was, to make people, such as architects and builders, do the things they ought to do. In this Dr. Penfield had the invaluable assistance of Dr. William Feindel who, at Dr. Penfield's request, became Honorary Associate Osler Librarian. To all of these and to Dr. Edward Bensley who, as Acting Dean during this period, was almost totally occupied with general problems of the Faculty, but who always held something in reserve to apply to the needs of the Osler, we should also pay tribute today.

But, to return to Dr. Francis, one may well wonder what he would have thought of it all. He would doubtless, as suggested, have deplored the move in the first place; but once it was accomplished would he have approved of the new Library and of this next venture, the building of the Wing that is to bear his name?

I like to think that he would have approved of both; that he would indeed have been thrilled to see his beloved library at last established in a place where it could expand to house new acquisitions and where it could easily be reached by people who could not manage the three flights of stairs that had to be conquered by all but the favoured few in the old site. But he would not have been pleased with the infrastructure, the accommodation for the staff and the stack space. These, to put it kindly, were unworthy. Even when the flooding from the floors above was controlled and the plastic covers could be removed, these areas were far below the standard of the collection itself and the public area of the Library.

Thus, I think that he would have approved heartily of the results of the ingenious plans that have been developed by Drs. Donald Bates and Philip Teigen and the architects and carried out by Mr. Douglas Elliott, Director of the Physical Plant, and his staff. Between them they have used every square inch of this extraordinarily awkward space to the best advantage. The effect, besides being practical, is even pleasing. There is now proper housing for those books which are not on the Library's shelves, including many of the gems of the collection; there is space for the acquisitions that will be made in the next few years as the University continues its program, started immediately after the inheritance, of adding steadily to the original collection; and there is room for meetings, students and staff. It is a well designed working place. Here scholars with an interest in the history of Science generally and of Medicine in particular, may take full advantage of the tremendous opportunity afforded by William Osler when, by his collecting, he brought together so many of the fundamental tools of research in these areas.

What could be more fitting to the memory of Dr. Francis than this work-place connected to the Library in the interest of which he worked with absolute devotion for so many years?

I think there could be no more fitting memorial to the man, nor any more suitable title to the area. It is thus with great satisfaction that I declare the W.W. Francis Wing open.

The Osler Society happily occupied the Francis Seminar Room for its 267th and 268th meetings — happily, because the new seminar room and the adjoining lounge are ideally suited for the typical activities: a presentation, followed by conversation and the consumption of wine and cheese. The Fifty-seventh Annual Osler Banquet had as guest of honour Mr. Justice Thomas Berger of the Supreme Court of British Columbia, Commissioner of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry. He expanded after dinner on the topic of his Osler Lecture, "Growth, Consumption, and Environmental Values."

On October 5th, William Peterson, second year medical student at McGill and Osler Society Co-Chairman, spoke on "The Physician in Balzac's *Comédie Humaine*." He described the divers qualities and social roles of physicians as portrayed by the great French novelist, a reflection of roles and qualities that are eternally characteristic of the profession. Passages were cited illustrating the physician as oracle, as the voice of reason and cynicism, as the augur of doom, as callous scientist and establishmentarian, as incompetent butcher, as avaricious mercenary, as lecher, and even (thank goodness) as an honest, wise, skilful and benevolent healer.

On February 1st, the Osler Society and CUSO (Canadian University Service Overseas) jointly presented the BBC film, *A Fair Share of What Little We Have*. An exploration of the health-care delivery system in Tanzania, the film portrayed the sequelae of a third-world government's decision to concentrate its very limited resources on basic primary-care facilities and a hierarchy of non-physician local health workers. Janet MacLachlan of CUSO led the discussion following the screening of the film.

The Second Annual Osler Lecture was presented on April 19th, 1978, in the R. Palmer Howard Amphitheatre. Mr. Justice Berger emphasized that Canada's actions in the Arctic — our last frontier, and yet the millennial homeland of the Inuit and Dene, a land of fragile beauty and irreplaceable wilderness — will demonstrate in a fundamental way the sort of people we are. He urged all Canadians to consider deeply and realize the implications of the stand we adopt on the development of the North.

The Osler Banquet was held at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel on the evening of April 19th. The traditional ceremonies were practised with laudable gusto — the rafters seemed to shake with our rendition of the song, "Our Regius Prof." We particularly wish to thank our Honorary President, Dr. Jessie Boyd Scriver (MDCM McGill 1922). Her moving speech upon the presentation of Osler's *A Way of Life* was a rare and precious moment, that will long live in the memory of all who shared it.

William Peterson, MDCM II
Joel Palefsky, MDCM II
Co-Chairmen, the Osler Society, 1977-78

Editorial Committee for the *Newsletter*: E.H. Bensley, Editor; Philip Teigen, Librarian; Karin Waterhouse, Editorial Assistant.

SIR CHARLES WILLIAM LINDSAY (1856-1939)

The earliest and principal benefactors of the Osler Library were, of course, Sir William and Lady Osler and there is no danger of their roles in the creation of the Library being forgotten. However there is a possibility that the names of other later benefactors may disappear from view with the passage of the years, even though their gifts were considerable. One such is Sir Charles William Lindsay. When Sir Charles died in 1939, he left to McGill University a specific bequest of \$25,000 and a one-eighth share of the residue of his estate. This one-eighth share ultimately amounted to approximately \$12,000, so his total bequest was in the neighbourhood of \$37,000. He stated in his Will that the bequest was to be in memory of his mother and an uncle and he specified that \$10,000 should go to the Osler Library — a generous and welcome gift which still constitutes an important part of the special funds of the Library.

Reference was made to his bequest having been in memory of his mother and an uncle. His mother was Frances Mary Howard, the daughter of Robert Howard by his second wife. The uncle was Dr. Robert Palmer Howard, the son of Robert Howard by his first wife and therefore a half-brother of Charles Lindsay's mother. It is hardly necessary to identify Dr. Robert Palmer Howard for most readers of the *Newsletter*. He was the McGill Professor of Medicine so much admired by Osler. Of his gift to the Osler Library, Sir Charles Lindsay wrote — "As regards the bequest to McGill University, I desire the Osler Library to benefit to the extent of ten thousand dollars on account of the great friendship existing between my uncle, the late Dr. R. Palmer Howard, and Sir William Osler."

Charles William Lindsay had a remarkable career. His achievements would have been regarded as remarkable under any circumstances. They were made all the more so by his handicap. He became totally blind at the age of 19 years. He attended the Perkins Institute for the Blind at Watertown, Massachusetts, where he became an expert in piano tuning. Starting with this modest accomplishment, he established the Montreal firm of C.W. Lindsay, built up one of the largest musical instrument business in Canada, and became a millionaire.

He was a generous benefactor of countless medical and welfare institutions; his donations ran into millions. Published lists of the recipients of his benefactions seem to cover virtually every worthy cause and included McGill University and its affiliated hospitals. He took a special interest in the Montreal General Hospital where Dr. Robert Palmer Howard's son, Dr. Campbell Howard, was a senior physician. His benefactions were not confined to gifts of money. He offered his services freely on many governing boards, services which, in view of his extraordinary abilities, were of great value. As might be expected, he was especially active in the Canadian National Institute for the Blind and devoted time and money unstintingly to this cause. He was Honorary President of the Institute from 1931 until his death and bequeathed to it the princely sum of \$300,000.

There is no doubt that Sir Charles Lindsay remembered his uncle, Dr. Robert Palmer Howard, with affection and gratitude. It is recorded that when Charles Lindsay became blind, he was much comforted by his uncle and he remained ever grateful to him. When Osler's books came to McGill University, Charles Lindsay recalled the close relationship between Osler and his uncle, and he visited the Osler Library. Dr. W.W. Francis, our first Osler Librarian, has recalled that Lindsay spent some time in the Library, handling the books with great interest, especially the old bindings. As in all things, he did not allow his blindness to prevent him from appreciating what he could not see.

Sir Charles Lindsay's name has been attached to an annual prize established by the Provincial Chapter of the Quebec IODE for a deserving student in the Faculty of Music of McGill University. However his name does not figure prominently in the annals of our Medical Faculty. It is hoped that this article will serve as a reminder that Sir Charles was a good friend to our Faculty, in part through his interest in the Osler Library and still more through his earnest desire to be of service to all who needed his help.

E.H. Bensley

HISTORY OF QUARANTINE AND EPIDEMICS

This spring the Osler Library exhibit was devoted to the history of quarantine and epidemics to commemorate the 600th anniversary of the introduction of quarantine in Dubrovnik, formerly Ragusa, situated on the Southern Adriatic coast of present-day Yugoslavia. The exhibit, which attracted considerable attention, was conceived and prepared by Zlata Blazina, a member of the staff of the Osler Library. In this project, valuable help was given Mrs. Blazina by Docent Dr. Biserka Belicza, Institute of the History of Medicine, University of Zagreb, Croatia, Yugoslavia.

FRIENDS OF THE OSLER LIBRARY

The appeal to the Friends for the 1977-78 academic year concluded at the end of May and the Library is very gratified to receive the \$3982.50 contributed by 234 Friends. The appeal for the 1978-79 academic year will be made in the October *Newsletter*; there will also be a note describing how the Friends' contributions have been used by the Library in addition to making possible the continuation of the *Newsletter*. The Library acknowledges with thanks the support of all its Friends. The following have been added to the list since the publication of the February *Newsletter*.

- F. Braun, Bellingham, WA
- *G.J. D'Angelo, Erie, PA
- A.M. Donovan, Lynnfield, MA
- *D.L. Gales, Como, PQ
- †W.C. Gibson, Vancouver, BC
- S.H. Gottlieb, Baltimore, MD
- O.C. Gruner, Montreal, PQ (in memoriam)
- J. Hofmeyr, Grays Essex, England
- *H.L. Holley, Birmingham, AL
- *R.H. Jones, Clarksburg, WV
- J.A. Liebert, Bellevue, WA
- S.W. Little, Roanoke, VA
- *J.H. Ménétrez, Bethesda, MD
- M.W. Miller, Altoona, PA
- J. Patrick, Montreal, PQ
- N.J. Robert, Newton, MA
- J.B. Roche, Sydney, Australia
- *F.H. Russ, Champaign, IL
- A.J. Smith, Oneida, NY
- *C.C. Smith, Toronto, ON
- *P.J. Stephens, Davenport, IO
- J.A.F. Stevenson, London, ON (in memoriam)
- M. Trossman, Peterborough, ON
- University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma, OK
- Woodward Biomedical Library, Vancouver, BC
- *M. Wright, Montreal, PQ

† *Patron*

* *Supporting Friend*