

OSLER LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

McGill University, Montreal, Canada

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The Butterworth Imprint and the Indian Edition of Osler's Textbook

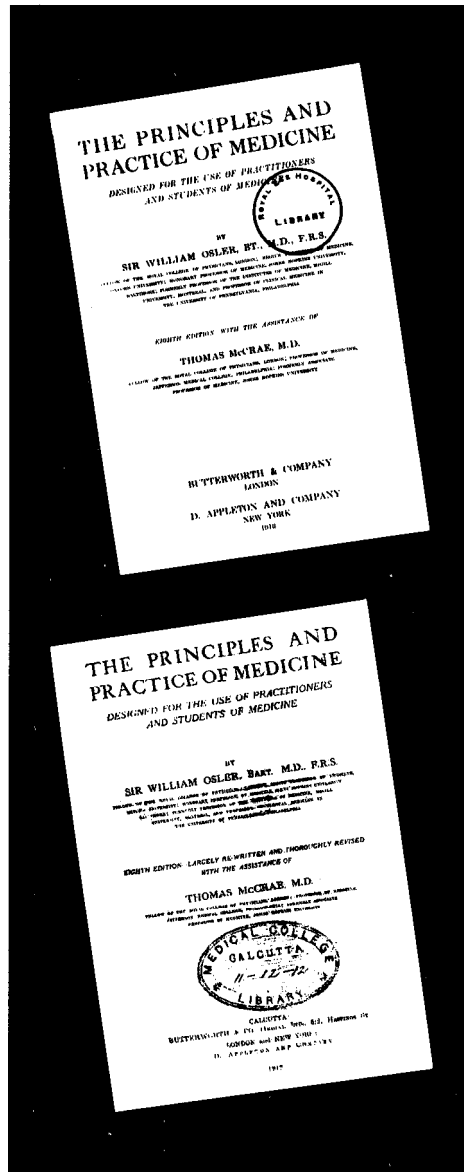


he works of William Osler are well known for their prolificacy, variety, and bibliographical complexity. This is particularly true for his textbook, *The Principles and Practice of Medicine*, which passed

through sixteen editions and multiple printings from 1892 to 1947. The principal publisher associated with the English language editions of this work was D. Appleton & Co., New York and London, including Sydney Appleton, London; Appleton & Co., London; and D. Appleton-Century Co., New York and London. Other imprints in Britain and Canada were Young J. Pentland, Edinburgh and London; Henry Kimpton, London; and George N. Morang and Co., Toronto. For the most part these were made from Appleton sheets with cancel titles. It is indeed an unusual event, considering the close and ongoing investigation of Osler's works, to find the hitherto unrecognized imprint of Butterworth and Co. in the early part of this century.

Butterworth & Co. is a venerable, old British publishing house founded in 1818 by Henry Butterworth but tracing its corporate ancestry back to the sixteenth century in the reign of Edward VI. Even earlier anecdotal links to Shakespeare and William Caxton have been described. The company produced and sold law books exclusively for almost the first century of its existence. Following a decision to engage in overseas marketing, the firm established branches throughout the Empire beginning with Butterworth & Co. (India) in 1910. This was followed by divisions in Australia (1911), Canada (1912), New Zealand (1914), and South Africa (1934). In the United States a short lived Washington office was established in 1960, and a Boston office in 1975. (1)

Butterworth and Co. (India), with offices in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras conducted business from 1910 to 1946. There is little knowledge of its early activities during its years of expansion before 1929. In a departure from the traditional publishing practices of the parent company, this division ventured into general and medical publishing, as well as legal books. Of its medical works, Butterworth (India) published an estimated thirty-four new books and twelve new editions between 1912 and



1. Title page of the Butterworth (London), *The Principles and Practice of Medicine* eighth edition, 1916.

2. Title page of the Butterworth (India), *The Principles and Practice of Medicine*, eighth edition, 1912.

1940. Many of these were by Indian authors and devoted to local problems. (1)

In 1912, the eighth edition of Osler's *The Principles and Practice of Medicine*, was published in Calcutta by Butterworth (India), from American sheets with a cancel title. (Fig. 1) The title page is identical with the Appleton edition except for the absence of the D. Appleton & Co. logo, and the imprint, "Calcutta: Butterworth & Co. (India),

Ltd., 8/2 Hastings St./London and New York/D. Appleton and Company/1912". The verso of the title page reads: "Copyright, 1892, 1895, 1898, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1909, 1912, By D. Appleton and Company; Printed in the United States of America".

Another printing of the eighth edition was issued in 1917. (Fig. 2) The title page is the same as the American edition except for the absence of the logo, and the imprint, "Calcutta: Butterworth & Co. (India), Ltd., 6A Hastings St./Winnipeg: Butterworth & Co. (Canada), Ltd./Sydney: Butterworth & Co. (Australia), Ltd./London: Butterworth & Co., Bell Yard, Temple Bar./Medical Publishers/1917". The verso had the additional copyright of 1916 and is otherwise the same. This, too, was made from Appleton sheets with a cancel title.

In Britain the first three editions of *The Principles and Practice of Medicine*, were published by Young J. Pentland, Edinburgh and London. The convoluted history of the fourth edition has recently been reviewed. (2) The fifth to seventh editions came from Sydney Appleton, London. (3) A 1916 printing of the eighth edition was published by Butterworth and Co., as were most of the previous British editions, from American pages with a cancel title. (Fig. 3) The title page is the same except for the imprint, "Butterworth & Company/London/D. Appleton and Company/New York/1916". The verso of the title page bears the additional copyright date of 1916, "By D. Appleton and Company", and "Printed in the United States of America". "Butterworth" and the edition number appear on the spine.

Dr. Richard Golden has contributed to this number of the Newsletter another of his ongoing studies of the convoluted publishing career of Osler's famous textbook, *Principles and Practice of Medicine*. Readers who have relished his earlier exploits of running "pirates" to ground, or pushing out literary "ghosts", will be pleased to hear that Dr. Golden has abandoned all pretense of practising internal medicine - in brief, he has retired - and is now devoting his entire energies to his historical and Oslerian researches. The first fruits of his retirement, presented in this article, augur well for his "second career".

The present day Butterworth & Co., (Publishers) Ltd. (London), publishes only law books. Butterworth's India division has been defunct for almost half a century. (Hastings Street, the site of the Calcutta division, is now Kiron Shanker Roy Road.) Medical books continue to be produced by Butterworth Heinemann (Oxford) and by the Appleton-Century-Crofts (New York) division of Prentice-Hall, Inc. Both Butterworth and Appleton have been considerably diluted in recent times and neither of these organizations, in their present form, maintains any formal archives, nor can they supply historical information relative to their early publications. Fortunately, both houses have had their biographers to preserve much of their rich heritage. The Appleton history was portrayed by Overton (1925) (4) and Wolfe (1981) (5); and Butterworth by Kay Jones (1980). (1) Regrettably, none of these authors refers to the Osler-Appleton-Butterworth connection. Only Kay Jones in his Butterworth-sanctioned history, mentions Appleton-Century-Crofts as one of the U.S. publishers that handled Butterworth books on occasion. He also states that Butterworth's medical publishing in England first began in 1936, obviously with no knowledge of the 1916 venture. (1) It is interesting to note that it was Butterworth who published Penicillin, Sir Alexander Fleming's landmark book in 1946. (6) It appears evident that, despite the absence of formal documentation, an Appleton-Butterworth accord existed under which Butterworth acquired the publication rights for the eighth edition of Osler's textbook in Britain and India.

The finding of the Butterworth imprint and the knowledge of an Indian edition of Osler's textbook is not merely of bibliographical importance, but serves to demonstrate further the truly world-wide influence of William Osler through the ex-

tension of his work to the Indian subcontinent. Furthermore, in India where there are over one hundred and fifty indigenous languages, the Principles and Practice of Medicine and other English language textbooks served as a medical lingua franca. At present, both English and Hindi are the official languages of modern India, and fifteen state languages (including Hindi) are constitutionally recognized. (7)

It is not unlikely that time and further research will reveal additional British and Indian Butterworth printings of The Principles and Practice of Medicine.

Acknowledgements

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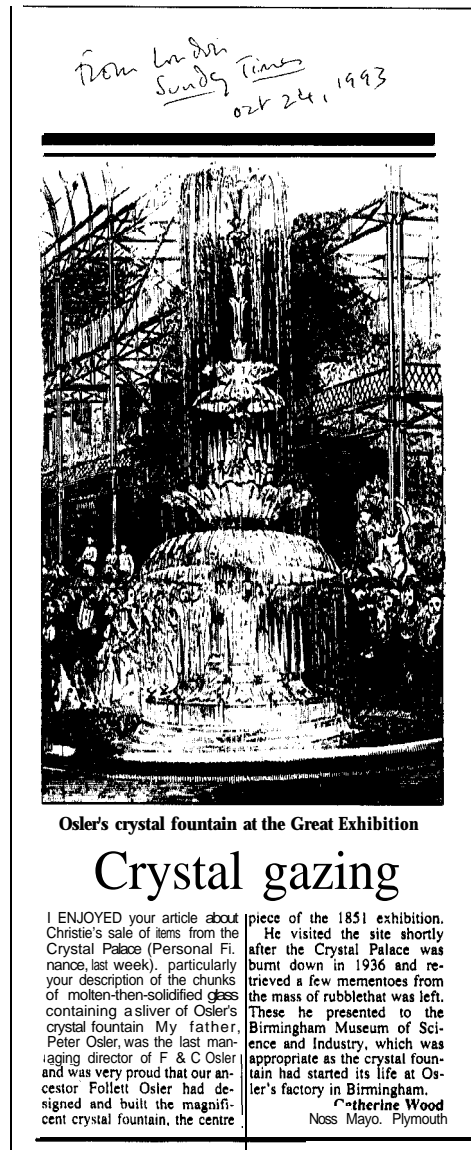
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7. Indian Languages, Microsoft Encarta, 1994.

THE F. & C. OSLER CO.

In recent months two of the Library's faithful Friends have, separately, drawn attention to the F. & C. Osler Co., of Birmingham, England (manufacturers of crystal glass furniture, established 1807, ceased business 1922). Dr. Nicholas Dewey sent us a photocopy from the Sunday Times of London, dated October 24, 1993 with an illustration of "Osler's crystal fountain at the Great Exhibition", (designed and built by Follett Osler) and a letter to the Editor from one of Follett Osler's descendants. Dr. Lawrence D. Longo sent information about an exhibition of crystal tableware and furniture made by the company, held recently at Mallett in London.

Could there be a connection between this firm and Sir William's family? If our readers have information or suggestions, we would be pleased to hear from them.



Osler's crystal fountain at the Great Exhibition

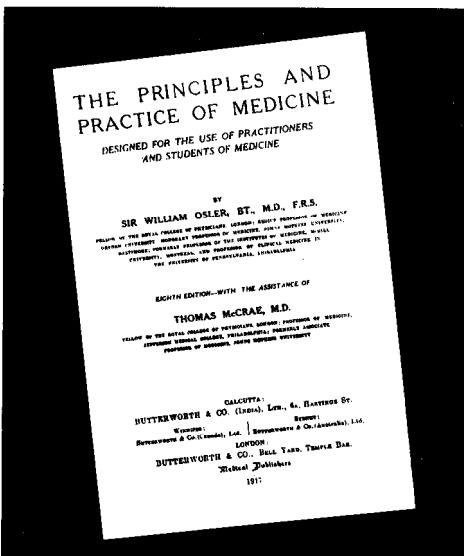
Crystal gazing

I ENJOYED your article about Christie's sale of items from the Crystal Palace (Personal Finance, last week), particularly your description of the chunks of molten-then-solidified glass containing a sliver of Osler's crystal fountain. My father, Peter Osler, was the last managing director of F & C Osler and was very proud that our ancestor Follett Osler had designed and built the magnificent crystal fountain, the centre piece of the 1851 exhibition. He visited the site shortly after the Crystal Palace was burnt down in 1936 and retrieved a few mementoes from the mass of rubble that was left. These he presented to the Birmingham Museum of Science and Industry, which was appropriate as the crystal fountain had started its life at Osler's factory in Birmingham. Catherine Wood Noss Mayo, Plymouth

DE FABRICA

One of the best loved and most sought after books in the Library's collection is the *Humani corporis fabrica* of Vesalius, first published in Basel in 1543. *De fabrica*, as it is usually called, has recently been exhibited, along with other treasures, in the case in the Osler Room, where dozens of visitors have exclaimed over it and pored over the typed "legend" beside it in the case. Explanatory cards in exhibition cases generally contain a few greatly condensed lines giving the salient facts, but it seemed impossible to do justice to *De fabrica* other than by reproducing the words of Osler's own note on the book. By coincidence, Dr. William Gibson, a long-time Friend of the Library, wrote in December asking if Osler's superb statement on *De fabrica* could be printed in the Newsletter. Thank you for the suggestion, Dr. Gibson, and here it is, reproduced from the *Bibliotheca Osleriana*.

"In itself, for what it contains, but still more for what it did, the '*Humani corporis fabrica*' is one of the great books of the world, with which in the literature of Medi-



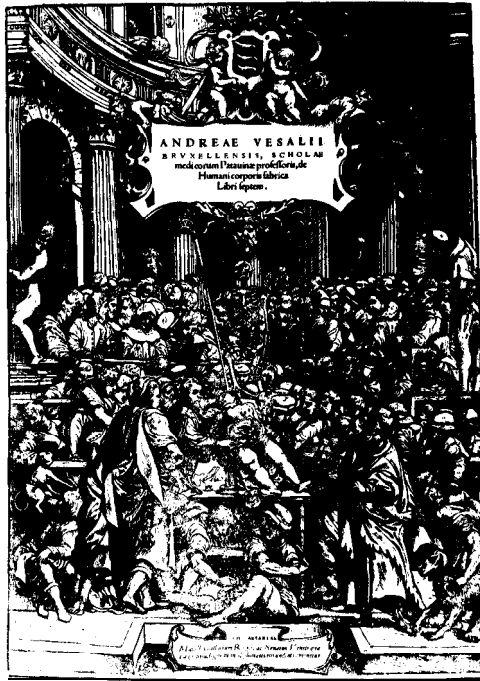
3. Title page of the Butterworth (India), The Principles and Practice of Medicine, eighth edition, 1917.

cine only the 'De motu cordis' of Harvey is to be compared. The one revolutionized anatomy, the other created modern physiology. This work of Vesalius is the first modern treatise on anatomy based upon dissections of the human body. To appreciate the extraordinary character of the descriptions and of the plates they must be compared with contemporary works. Vesalius really described the body as we know it, for the first time fully, and for the first time accurately. It is difficult to say whether in text or figure the departure from the anatomy of the day is the more striking. There are grave mistakes of omission and of commission, but they appear insignificant in a volume full of such important contributions. To the middle of the sixteenth century anatomy was taught from the writings of Galen, not from what was seen in the occasional public dissections. From what the great Master had written there was no appeal, and the veneration with which his works were regarded was as for a gospel, like the feeling men have towards the sacred Scriptures. Imagine the surprise and consternation of the easy-going old professors who held the chairs of anatomy to have a huge volume thrust into their hands filled from cover to cover with descriptions and figures with which they were unfamiliar. And written by a young man of 28! Headed by his old teacher Sylvius a storm of opposition soon raged, and a vindication of Galen was attempted, but it was soon found that the old anatomy, correct enough in places, was largely that of swine, dogs and monkeys, while the 'Fabrica' contained descriptions and figures from human dissections. To understand the phenomenon, almost unique in the history of science, of a revolution of this character effected by so young a man, we must remember that from boyhood Vesalius had had a perfect passion for dissecting. After devoting his energies to the anatomy of the domestic animals, he robbed graveyards and the gallows for human skeletons, while as early as 1534-36, as prosecutor to Sylvius and Guinterius in Paris, he had opportunities to dissect the human body. His reputation must have been remarkable, as at the age of 23 he was appointed Professor at Padua, one of the leading schools of Europe. The 'Fabrica' remains a monument of human effort, one of the greatest in the history of our profession.

I am glad to be able to send this beautiful copy of the first edition to the library of my old school, in which anatomy has always been studied in the Vesalian spirit - with accuracy and thoroughness. William Osler. Rome, March 9th, 1909."

ERRATUM

The lead article of the October 1994 issue of the Newsletter contained some errors in the citation of references. Note 86 should refer to p. 73 of Munk's book, while references 29 and 30 apply respectively to pages 1360 and 1370 of Cushing's Life of Sir William Osler.



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The Library gratefully acknowledges the support it has received from Friends, both old and new, who have responded to the appeal for funds for the 1994-95 academic year. To date 280 Friends have given a total of approximately \$23,363. Included in the total are two special donations, one of \$5000 (U.S.) received for the Osler Library and for the use of the History of Medicine Librarian; and another, also of \$5000 (Cdn.), received for the Osler Library. Most of the contributions have come from Friends in Canada and the United States of America. However, very welcome contributions have also come from Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

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