

**SIR WILLIAM OSLER, BART:
BRIEF TRIBUTES TO HIS
PERSONALITY, INFLUENCE
AND PUBLIC SERVICE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649472604

Sir William Osler, Bart: Brief Tributes to His Personality, Influence and Public Service by
Henry M. Thomas

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

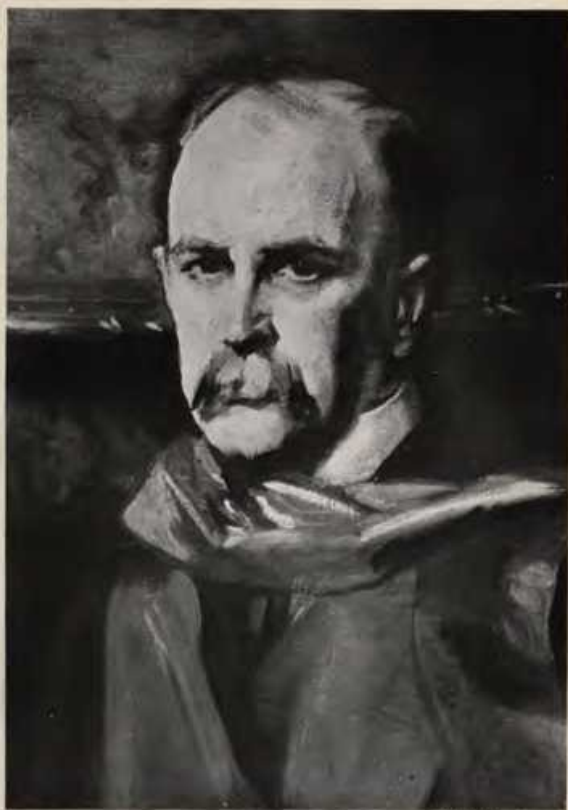
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WILLIAM OSLER IN 1906. Painted by Sargent.

SIR WILLIAM OSLER, *BART.*



**Brief Tributes to His Personality,
Influence and Public Service**

Written by His Friends, Associates and Former Pupils,
In Honor of His Seventieth Birthday and First Published in the
Bulletin of The Johns Hopkins Hospital for July, 1919

THE JOHN HOPKINS PRESS

THE JOHN HOPKINS PRESS
BALTIMORE, MD.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Some Memories of the Development of the Medical School and of Osler's Advent. By HENRY M. THOMAS.....	7
Osler as Chief of a Medical Clinic. By LEWELLYS F. BARKER..	19
Some of the Early Medical Work of Sir William Osler. By W. T. COUNCILMAN.....	33
Osler as a Pathologist. By WILLIAM G. MACCALLUM.....	45
Osler, the Teacher. By W. E. THAYER.....	51
Osler and the Student. By THOMAS R. BROWN.....	55
Osler and Patient. By THOMAS McCRAE.....	59
Osler and the Tuberculosis Work of the Hospital. By LOUIS HAMMAN	65
Influence on the Relation of Medicine in Canada and the United States. By THOMAS B. FUTCHER.....	69
Osler as a Citizen and His Relation to the Tuberculosis Crusade in Maryland. By HENRY BARTON JACOBS.....	75
Osler's Influence on Other Medical Schools in Baltimore. His Relation to the Medical Profession. By EDWARD N. BRUSH.....	83
Influence in Building up the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty. By HIRAM WOODS.....	89
Osler and the Book and Journal Club. By J. A. CHATAIN.....	95
Osler's Influence on the Library of the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of the State of Maryland. By MARGIA C. NOYES, Librarian.....	97
Some Early Reminiscences of William Osler. By HENRY M. HURD	101
Osler as I Knew Him in Philadelphia and in the Hopkins. By HOWARD A. KELLY.....	107
Osler as a Bibliophile. By THOMAS R. BOGGS.....	111
Osler's Literary Style. By EDWARD N. BRUSH.....	115
Bibliography. By MINNIE WRIGHT BLOSS.....	121

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SIR WILLIAM OSLER, BART.

SOME MEMORIES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL AND OF OSLER'S ADVENT

BY HENRY M. THOMAS

In thinking of the early days of The Johns Hopkins University and Hospital and the development of the medical school, my memories begin with the founder—Johns Hopkins. As a small boy between 10 and 12 I sat on the same bench with Johns Hopkins many Sunday mornings at the Friends' Meeting on Eutaw and Monument streets. I cannot remember that he ever spoke to me, and I remember him merely as a rather unkempt old gentleman. At that time he had announced his intentions for his double bequest, had, in 1867, incorporated the two institutions that were to bear his name, had appointed his trustees, and had bought the site for the hospital. Gallo-way Cheston, the president of the university board; Francis T. King, president of the hospital board; Francis White, James Carey Thomas, James Carey, and other trustees, were also constant attendants at the meeting, and it is pleasant now to think that in the congregation there were represented the founder, his trustees, and the rising generation which was to be benefited by the bequests.

Johns Hopkins believed that his wealth had been given to him for a purpose, and, to use a Friendly form of speech, that he would be "given to see" how to dispose of it. He had asked advice freely and much had been volunteered, and many of his advisers have claimed that they suggested the objects of his bequests and the forms which they should take, but I like to think that the wise instructions that he gave to his trustees were finally determined in meeting. The most important of

these for the development of the medical school was his direction in a letter to the hospital board, dated March 10, 1873, that "in all your arrangements in relation to this hospital you will bear constantly in mind that it is my wish and purpose that the institution shall ultimately form a part of the medical school of that university for which I have made ample provision by my will," so uniting forever the two bequests for the furtherance of medical education.

Johns Hopkins died on December 24, 1873, and in the early part of 1875 the trustees received the bequests and entered into active administration of the trusts. The first important decision of the university board was the wise and fortunate choice of Daniel C. Gilman as president of the university. He came to Baltimore May 1, 1875, and I can remember well the expectation and interest his coming aroused. He and his two daughters took apartments at the old Mt. Vernon Hotel, and for me a delightful friendship began.

Johns Hopkins chose his trustees well and left them untrammelled, and they in their turn gave President Gilman a free hand. They had already determined upon the establishment of a real university, which, as Gilman once said, was to supplement and not supplant existing institutions. In speaking of his first instructions which he received from the trustees, he says :

Often in private conversations and in official interviews, I was charged to hold up the highest standards, to think of nothing but the best which was possible under the limitations of the new establishment in a country where the idea of a university had not been generally understood.

In furtherance of these objects, President Gilman, in the summer of 1875, went abroad to visit the various universities and to consult with the leaders in education. Medical education was much in his mind, particularly the establishment of the laboratories and courses of instruction in the fundamental sciences which would be best fitted for the preliminary training of medical students. The field was almost entirely unbroken, and young men not yet 30 were selected for its cultivation—