

The Oslerian

A Message from the President

Osler and Plutarch (45-120 C.E.)

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Greetings, Fellow Oslerians!

In the summer of 1917, Osler purchased a copy of "Philemon Holland's 1603 Plutarch's Morals," describing it as "a great book" (Both quotes are from Cushing, 1940, 1255). In responding to Revere's death later that year, Osler reflected on his son's interest in reading his father's "old friends in the spirit" (Cushing, 1940, 1264). Plutarch was the first "friend" named in Osler's list.

Plutarch was born in Chaeronea, Boeotia (a district in ancient Greece). He studied in Athens, traveled in Egypt and Italy (lecturing in Rome), and directed a school in Boeotia. In later years, he was also a priest of the temple at Delphi.

Osler's bedside library for medical students included Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*. In this book (also titled *The Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans*), Plutarch offered biographical accounts of 50 persons (soldiers, statesmen, legislators, orators), including 23 Greeks paired with 23 Romans. By describing and interpreting their lives, Plutarch revealed certain components of human character, and the consequences of choosing virtue or vice. He wanted to promote mutual es-

teem between the Greeks and Romans.

In his collection of quotations from the authors of Osler's recommended bedside library titled *Saints of Humanity*, Charles Bryan selected 55 quotations from *Lives* and other writings by Plutarch. Consider two from *Lives*: "It is not enough, it seems, that our actions should be noble and just: the conviction from which they spring must be permanent and irrevocable, if our conduct is to earn full approval. Otherwise we may find ourselves becoming a prey to despondency, or to sheer weakness when the vision of the ideal which inspired us fades away" (*Saints*, 2). "Power and good fortune must be accompanied by wisdom and justice if a man's political actions are to be seen as noble as well as great" (*Saints*, 5). Other quotes by Plutarch are found in *Saints* on pages 7, 8, 10, 13, 16, 18, 21, 22, 23, 25, 28, 30, 31, 33, 35, 37, 42, 44, 45, 46, 51, 53, 58, 60, 62, 63, 66, 67, 68, 72, 74, 76, 78, 80, 82, 86, 88, 90, 92, 94, 96, 100, 101, 103, 106, 108, 110, and 114. Examining these quotes provides some insight into the reasons for Osler's interest in Plutarch.

As a philosopher, Plutarch was eclectic with a central core of Platonism that included significant influences from the Stoics and Pythagoreans. In addition to *Lives*, Plutarch wrote more than 60 essays on historical, ethical, political, and literary topics (*Moralia*). Italian humanists translated Plutarch's works into Latin and Italian during the fifteenth century. New additions appeared in the next century, including translations in French. *Lives* was translated into English in 1759; *Moralia* in 1603. On May 9, 2004, a search of Plutarch in Amazon.com gave 158 results that included editions of *Lives* and *Moralia* in the Loeb Classical Library.

These glimpses allow us to speculate rather easily about Osler's interest in Plutarch. However, a more thorough analysis of the latter's writings would enable us to have a richer appreciation of Osler's interest in this very influential Greek philosopher. Osler, for example, said nothing about the many scenes of rape and murder in Plutarch's *Lives*, probably more than we can watch in Hollywood movies and nightly television crime shows. Why did he delete this



Chester R. Burns

continued on Page 2

Osler and Plutarch (continued)

Facet of Plutarch's approach? Was this a romanticism gone amuck? These are just a few of the questions that could be considered by someone making a thorough study.

According to Clyde Partin's list of papers prepared during previous annual meetings, no one has given a paper about Osler's interest in Plutarch. I hope that a reader of this column will become interested in

preparing such a paper for presentation during a future meeting. For help in studying Plutarch, consult R. H. Barrow's *Plutarch and his Times* (1967), C. P. Jones's *Plutarch and Rome* (1971), and J. Mossman's *Plutarch and his Intellectual World* (1967).

Chester R. Burns
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Oslerian Progress Notes

Kenneth M. Ludmerer received the 2003 Abraham Flexner Award for Distinguished Service to Medical Education from the Association of American Medical Colleges. This is the AAMC's highest award and the highest honor in the nation for contributions to medical education. Ludmerer was cited for his two books on medical education, *Time to Heal* and *Learning to Heal*. The award was presented at the AAMC's annual meeting in Washington, D.C., in November 2003.

Ludmerer also received the 2004 William Welch Award from the American Association for the History of Medicine for *Time to Heal*. This award is given to an outstanding book in the history of medicine published during the preceding five-year period. The award was presented in April 2004 at the AAHM's annual meeting in Madison, Wisconsin.

William Smith, Jr., received two Bronze Stars for his service with the United States Army in Iraq. One of these was awarded for meritorious action when his convoy came under fire. The other was awarded for his service to wounded troops. Bill returned safely from his tour, but is considering a second tour of duty in the theater.



William Smith, Jr., our man in Iraq, received two Bronze Stars for Aequanimitas under fire.

Joe Vander Veer, Jr. has had published *A Surgeon's Devotions* (Enumclaw, Washington: Pleasant Word).

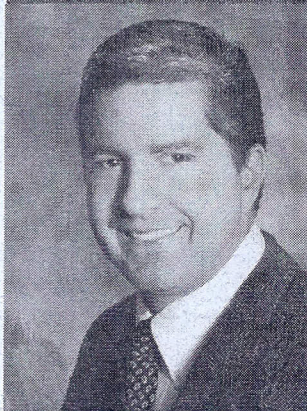
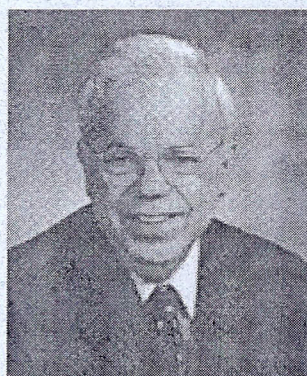
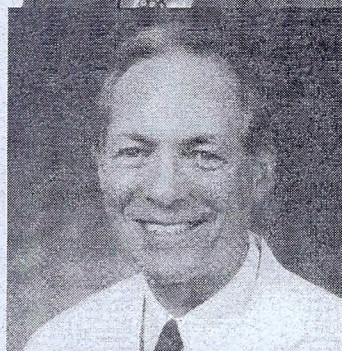
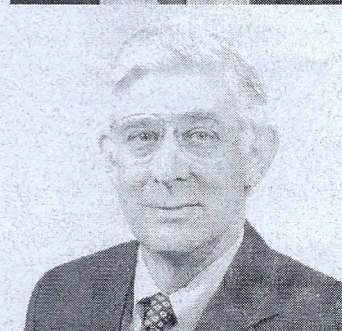
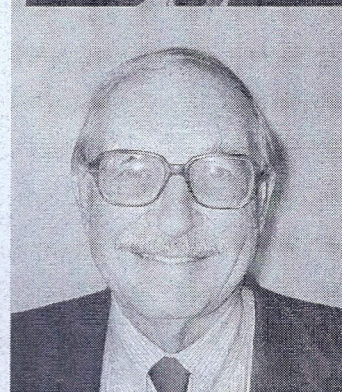
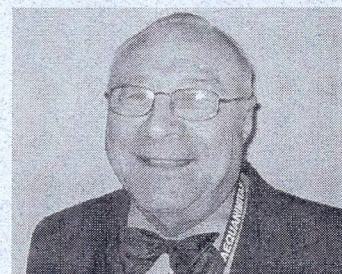
Juan Pollola and his colleagues in Buenos Aires, Argentina, have just opened the Instituto William Osler, a multispecialty group practice.

Clif Cleaveland has had published *Healers & Heroes: Ordinary People in Extraordinary Times* (Philadelphia: American College of Physicians Press).

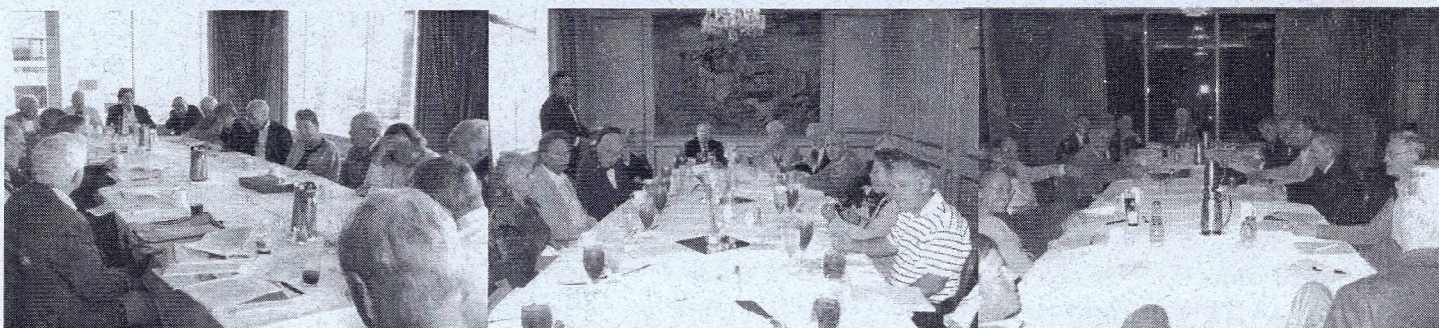
John Graner has had published *A History of the Department of Internal Medicine at the Mayo Clinic* (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research).

Welcome New Members!

At the 2004 annual meeting in Houston, six new members were elected and one associate member was advanced to regular membership. They are, clockwise, from right: Jack B. Alperin (Galveston, Texas); William H. Jarrett, II (Atlanta, Georgia; advanced to Membership from Associate Membership); John A. Kastor (Baltimore, Maryland); M. Alan Menter (Dallas, Texas); Michael E. Moran (Albany, New York); Charles Stewart Roberts (Winchester, Virginia); and Marc E. Weksler (Tenafly, New Jersey). All seven have met our criteria for membership including presenting a paper at an annual meeting. Members can obtain an updated membership directory online or by contacting the AOS office (smitch@gw.mp.sc.edu).



Some Pictorial Highlights of the 2004 Annual Meeting



Three well-attended events took place on Sunday—the annual reading seminar led by Frank Neelon (left); a dinner meeting to discuss medical professionalism organized by Herbert Swick (center), and the Board of Governors meeting presided over by Marvin Stone.



John Graner was among those who posed for their portraits before a mantelpiece brought to Houston from 13 Norham Gardens.

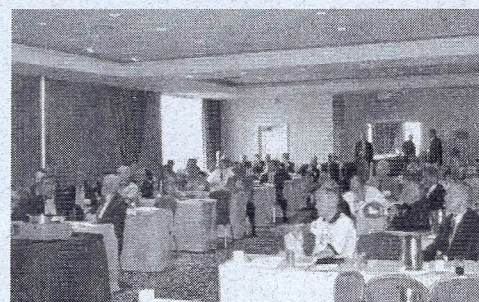


Georgians Clyde Partin and Bill Jarrett relax at the McGovern library.

After the 2003 annual meeting in Edinburgh, Scotland, with its great halls and pageantry, president Marvin Stone posed the rhetorical question, "What can we do for an encore?" The 2004 annual meeting in Houston and Galveston, Texas, surpassed all expectations. More than one member exclaimed, "This is probably our best meeting ever!" The events planned by Bob Rakel, Steve Greenberg, Chester Burns, and others came off almost flawlessly. Credit is also due to the speakers, who without exception kept their presentations to 15 minutes—and as it turned out, this was not a problem! These three pages contain a quite arbitrary selection of the meeting's highlights.



Elton Kerr was last seen examining rare books at the John P. McGovern Historical Collections and Research Center.



Speakers kept to their 20-minute slots before an appreciative audience.



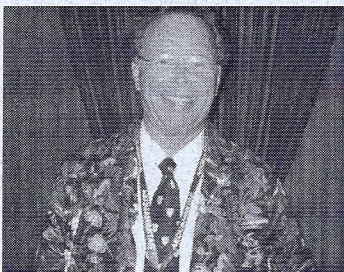
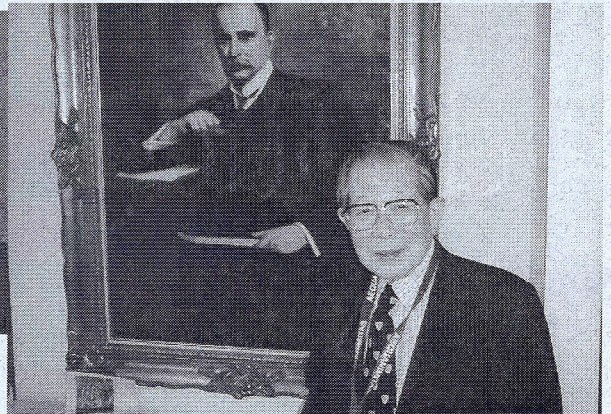
Neil McIntyre, John Fordtran, and Robert Crane talk gastroenterology.



John Noble and Martin Dalton took it all in.



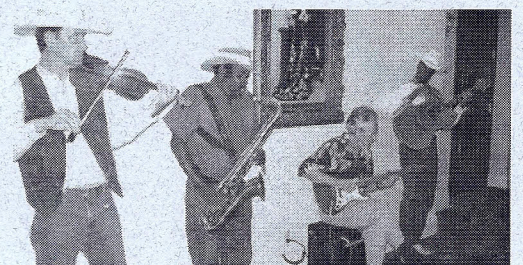
Torence Ryan came from Oxford, England, to represent Green College and 13 Norham Gardens; Juan Pollola came from Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he directs the Instituto William Osler; Shigeaki Hinohara (right) came from Tokyo, Japan, where he continues to promote Osler's heritage.



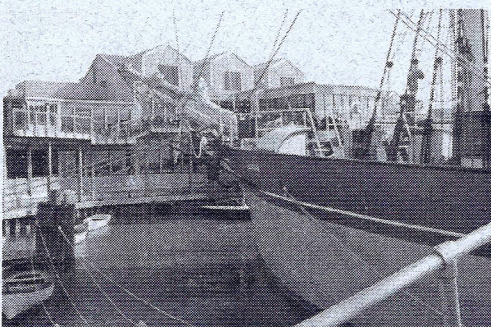
First vice-president Chester Burns told us that a shirt just like his may be obtained from Alpha Apparel Hawaiian Shirts at www.rainbowhawaii.com (ask for "Under the Sea [Blue]").



The videotape documentary of the AOS by Rob Stone (left, with his parents, Jill and Marvin Stone) made its debut at the annual banquet to our delight and awe.



Oslerians flocked to La Colombe d'Or for the banquet, where they were greeted by an authentic Texas combo.



On Tuesday afternoon the venue shifted to "Old Red" on the UTMB campus; later, attractions in Galveston harbor included the *Elissa* (above left).



Local arrangements gurus Steve Greenberg and Bob Rakel finally relaxed at the banquet on Monday evening.



The session on Wednesday morning took place at the John P. McGovern Museum of Health & Medical Science. The session featured a dedication ceremony in the courtyard for ivy obtained from Osler's residence at 13 Norham Gardens, Oxford. At left, Randy Ray, the museum's executive director and CEO, points out the ivy to Shigeaki Hinohara. At right, Earl Nation, Marvin Stone, Shigeaki Hinohara, Chester Burns, CSB, and Randy Ray pose for the occasion.



Bill Roberts's paper on Dr. Tomlinson Fort of Milledgeville, Georgia, concluded the 2004 annual meeting.



As the meeting progressed, one person after another suggested that the 2005 annual meeting should be held in Pasadena, California, to honor all-world Oslerian Earl Nation (here with Carolyn Guidera)



At the annual business meeting, John Carson moved that the Society support as may be necessary Rob Stone's video project.



The Warwick Hotel's leisurely elevators enhanced our ability to make small talk with one another.



The McGovern Museum brought out the kids in us.



Marvin Stone transferred the latchkey, symbol of the office of president of the AOS, to Chester

In Memoriam

David M. Mumford (1927-2003)

David M. Mumford, M.D., a member of the American Osler Society since 1988, died November 24, 2003, in Houston, Texas at the age of 76. David was a pediatrician by training, but much more of a Renaissance man than that title implies. He was a professor at Baylor College of Medicine in the departments of Pediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Psychiatry. He was also director of the Baylor Population Program and Director of Immunology and Cancer Research. For the past 25 years he served as Baylor's Associate Dean for Continuing Education.

After completing his undergraduate studies at Yale, David spent two years in the U.S. Army and then graduated from Baylor College of Medicine in 1954. He completed a pediatric residency at the University of Michigan and after some time in practice completed a fellowship in immunology at Baylor where he remained on the faculty for the next 40 years.

David was an exceedingly kind and gentle man who served tirelessly on many boards including Planned Parenthood of Houston, Friends of the Texas Medical Center Library, Stehlin Laboratory for Clinical Research,

The Institute of Religion, and the Hospice of the Texas Medical Center. I had the privilege of serving with him on the last two Boards. A floor at the Hospice had been named after David and it is appropriate that he spent his last days as a patient on that floor. David also taught a course at Baylor on "Death and Dying," focusing not only on the compassion and caring so necessary at this time, but also on the role the patient's religion can play in easing the passage from this life. Topics included the Hindu belief in reincarnation, the Buddhist stairway to Heaven, and the Muslim, Christian, and Jewish points of view.

David was idealistic yet practical, intellectual, but down-to-

earth, compassionate and caring, gentle and kind. However, he could be stubborn and tough when he thought he was right. He was a man for all seasons who loved to read, write, reason, and debate.

Another of David's interests was the History of Medicine. He was instrumental in helping me establish a History of Medicine Society at Baylor 18 years ago, which continues to meet monthly. He established an annual lectureship on the History and Ideals of Medicine for which Ed Pellegrino will be our first speaker later this year.

—Robert E. Rakel

In Memoriam

Alex Sakula (1917-2003)

Alex Sakula, a past president of the Osler Club of London and whose many historical writings include *The Portraiture of Sir William Osler* (London: The Royal Society of Medicine, 1991), died December 27, 2003, of complications of cardiovascular disease. Full-length obituaries in *The Lancet*, *British Medical Journal*, and his beloved *Journal of Medical Biography*, of which he was a founding member of the editorial board, attest to his prominence in British medicine.

Alex, as he signed his correspondence, was the third child of Polish immigrants who came to London in 1900. As a boy he walked to school through the precincts of the London Hospital and apparently decided early on to pursue medicine. In 1942, two years after receiving his

medical degree, he reported successful treatment of pneumococcal meningitis with a sulfa drug. During World War II he served in the Royal Army Medical Corps, including three months at a jungle hospital on the River Kwai for freed prisoners of war. Upon his return to civilian practice in 1947, he began to specialize in pulmonary medicine. His work on tuberculosis led to numerous publications including the clinical distinction between tuberculosis and pulmonary histoplasmosis. Other noteworthy contributions included the role of antitrypsin deficiency in lung disease, lung cancer, and pneumoconiosis. He gave the first account of mushroom grower's lung (*British Medical Journal* 1967; 567: 708-710) and showed how to prevent this occupational disease, which was then virtually eradicated.



Alex Sakula

In 1982 Alex retired from the National Health Service and began to develop more fully his strong interest in medical history. He initially concentrated on the life stories of underappreciated pioneers in pulmonary medicine such as Pierre Piorry, who advanced the art of percussion. Later interests included medical paintings, portraits, and sculptures. In 1984 he became president of the Osler Club of London.

Alex developed diabetes mellitus, experienced a stroke, and became blind from glaucoma. In 1998, he gave a lecture in Paris on William Moon, who devised a way for blind people in Victorian England to read using embossed print. He continued his avid interest in Sir William Osler. In January 2003, he thanked me for sending him a copy of *The Quotable Osler* and added: "I suppose you are looking forward to the forthcoming Edinburgh meeting. I regret that I shall not be able to attend since my recent stroke has left me with a weak leg and my mobility is restricted. I am sure that the meeting will be a great success."

Alex is survived by Rene, his wife of 54 years, and by their four children.

—CSB

So You Think You Know Osler's Textbook? Answers to Quiz

The November 2003 issue of *The Oslerian* featured an open book quiz based on the first edition of Osler's *Principles and Practice of Medicine*, the challenge being to match the patient with the diagnosis. Surprisingly, there were no contestants for the handsome, suitable for framing print of *Osler at the Bedside*. Here are the answers, with page citations:

1. *Austin Flint*—allergy to feather pillows of a certain type (p. 477; answer KK)
2. *Marcus Aurelius*—smallpox (p. 46; answer OO)
3. *A Cornish miner*—pneumoconiosis with large fibroid areas (p. 554; answer HH)
4. *Louis Lateau*—hysteria with skin hemorrhages (p. 974; answer NN)
5. *Colonel Townsend*—Could slow his heart rate at will (p. 808; answer QQ)
6. *An army surgeon from the Civil War with recurrent hemoptysis*—mitral regurgitation (p. 627; answer D)
7. *Oliver Appleton*—hemophilia (p. 322; answer FF) (Appleton was "the first American bleeder; on page 320, Osler writes: "In the Appleton-Swain family, of Reading, Mass., there have been cases for nearly two centuries.")
8. *Prisoners at Amberg*—pneumococcal pneumonia (p. 512; answer G)
9. *Thomas King Chambers*—multiple peripheral arterial aneurysms (p. 671; answer L)
10. *A stout, powerfully built man who had been struck by an electric car*—traumatic neurosis (p. 982; answer W)
11. *A waitress at a hotel who was frightened by two men who were fighting*—acute chorea (? Toxemia of pregnancy) (p. 935; answer SS) (The waitress dropped a tray of dishes and subsequently developed violent twitching and jerking of the extremities; W.O. describes this as "maniacal chorea")
12. *Ignatious Loyola*—perforation of the bile duct with biliary fistula (p. 436; answer R)
13. *The victim in the Palmer murder trial*—tetanus (p. 164; answer F)
14. *Laurence Sterne*—pulmonary hemorrhage (p. 510; answer TT)
15. *Brunettes more than blondes*—neuroses of the stomach (p. 358; answer MM)
16. *Blondes more than brunettes*—primary or essential anemia (p. 686; answer AA)
17. *Montaigne*—recurrent renal calculi (pp. 766-767; answer PP)
18. *Schneeberg cobalt miners*—Lung cancer (p. 556; answer Y)
19. *New England fishermen who frequent the outer banks*—beriberi (p. 780; answer J)
20. *Jerome Cardan, Thomas Sydenham, and the elder Scalinger*—gout (p. 291; answer M)
21. *Renforth, the oarsmen*—acute pulmonary edema (p. 504; answer C)
22. *A young Irish cab-driver*—acute tuberculous pneumonia (p. 211; answer O)
23. *Julius Caesar and Napoleon*—epilepsy (p. 955; answer I)
24. *Chalmers, the celebrated Scottish divine*—cardiomyopathy (p. 645; answer H)
25. *The astronomer Airy*—migraine (p. 957; answer P)
26. *Baron Wassennar*—rupture of the esophagus (p. 343; answer BB)
27. *Dr. Anstie*—septicemia acquired from doing an autopsy (p. 446; answer LL)
28. *A pullman car conductor from Chicago*—smallpox (p. 47, 65; answer OO)
29. *The Farr Family*—muscular dystrophy (p. 859; answer II)
30. *Hartley Coleridge*—habit spasm (biting his arm while pressing his nose with his forefinger) (p. 942; answer Z)
31. *Poor washer-women*—chronic rheumatism (p. 278; answer EE)
32. *Hilton Fagge*—aortic aneurysm (p. 679; answer X)
33. *A Bavarian physician*—pleural fistula (p. 565; answer JJ)
34. *Master McGrath, the celebrated greyhound*—cardiomegaly (pp 635-636, 640; answer Q) (Like Eclipse, the race horse [question 42], Master McGrath was famous for endurance rather than speed).
35. *A sailor from the Mediterranean*—dysentery (p. 135; answer V)
36. *A sailor who fell from the deck*—tuberculous meningitis (p. 202; answer DD)
37. *An Arab covered with blood who was picked up by the police*—brain abscess (pp. 904-905; answer GG)
38. *Chancellor Ferrier of McGill University*—irregular heartbeat (p. 652; answer RR)
39. *A young, remarkably healthy-looking Irish girl*—malignant scarlet fever and tuberculous pleurisy (p. 235, 573; answer UU)
40. *The Sheffield workers*—pneumoconiosis; stonecutter's phthisis or the "grinder's rot" (p. 553; answer HH)
41. *Bright's celebrated patient, Cardinal*—hydrocephalus (p. 923; answer S)
42. *Eclipse, the race horse*—cardiomegaly (pp. 635-636; answer Q) (see Master McGrath, above)
43. *One of the most prominent clergymen on this continent*—anaesthetic leprosy (p. 259; answer CC)
44. *Worshippers at the shrines of Bacchus and Vulcan, and often Venus as well*—aortic regurgitation (p. 603; answer E)
45. *Laborers in Geneva*—vertigo with paraparesis and depression (p. 804; answer A)
46. *A "poor fellow" who was discharged from the Montreal General Hospital as a malingerer*—peritonitis due to perforation of a viscus (p. 360; answer T)
47. *A large, powerfully built imbecile*—obliterative endarteritis of the coronary arteries (p. 641; answer B)
48. *Ottawa lumbermen in the winter months*—locomotor ataxia (p. 841; answer U)
49. *A man who was paid to stay away from a restaurant at which dinners were given at fixed prices*—diabetes mellitus (p. 300; answer N)
50. *Clergymen, hucksters, and certain others*—chronic pharyngitis (p. 330; answer K)

AMERICAN OSLER SOCIETY

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Aequanimitas

The Oslerian is published approximately four times a year by the American Osler Society, Inc., a non-profit organization. Members of the American Osler Society are encouraged to send news items of interest, including but by no means limited to their personal activities and accomplishments and accompanied by photographs or other illustrations. For distribution of reprints and other materials of possible interest to AOS members, please send 180 copies. Your ideas for The Oslerian are of course most welcome! Direct all correspondence by mail, fax, or e-mail to the Secretary-Treasurer.

The American Osler Society has been founded for the purpose of bringing together members of the medical and allied professions who are, by their common inspiration, dedicated to memorialize and perpetuate the just and charitable life, the intellectual resourcefulness and the ethical example of **William Osler** (1849-1919). This, for the benefit of succeeding generations, that their motives be ever more sound, that their vision be on everbroadening horizons, and that they sail not as Sir Thomas Browne's Ark, without oars and without rudder and sails and, therefore, without direction.

Call for Abstracts for 2005 Annual Meeting in Pasadena, California, 10-13 April

The Board of Governors will meet on Sunday, April 10. Assuming that we once again have a surplus of abstracts, we will meet through the afternoon of Wednesday, April 13.

For several years we have received more quality submissions that can be accommodated. The Program Committee will be chaired by the First Vice-President, Claus A. Pierach. Please note the following guidelines for submission of abstracts (some of these are required for Continuing Medical Education credits):

1. Abstracts must be **received** by the Secretary-Treasurer by 15 November 2004. **FAX and e-mail submissions will be accepted only from overseas members and guests.** Members and invited guests are encouraged to submit their abstracts well prior to the deadline.
2. The abstract should be no longer than one page. It should begin with the complete title, the names of all co-authors, and the corresponding author's mailing address, telephone number, FAX, and e-mail address. The text should provide sufficient information for the Program Committee to determine its merits and possible interest to the membership. The problem should be defined and the conclusions should be stated. Phrases such as "will be presented" should be avoided or kept to a minimum.
3. Three learning objectives should be given after the abstract. Each learning objective should begin with an active verb indicating what attendees should be able to *do* after the presentation (for example, "list," "explain," "discuss," "examine," "evaluate," "define," "contrast," or "outline"; avoid noncommittal verbs such as "know," "learn," and "appreciate").
4. Each author should provide a brief (two- to five-sentence) description of himself/herself, which will serve as the speaker's introduction. We have learned that providing this information in the program booklet saves valuable meeting time.
5. Each author supply a curriculum vitae (a one-page synopsis is acceptable), which is required for Continuing Medical Education.
6. A covering letter should state:
 - The corresponding author's opinion of the paper's potential interest to members.
 - Whether any of the authors have a potential conflict-of-interest such as direct financial involvement in the topic being discussed, and whether there will be any mention of offlabel use of drugs or other products during the presentation.
 - Audiovisual requirements for the presentation (e.g., computer and LCD or 35 mm projector).
 - *Optional:* Whether the author(s) insist on a time slot longer than 20 minutes (At the 2004 meeting, we determined that 20-minute time slots, with papers carefully timed to 15 minutes, worked quite well for nearly all presentations).
 - *Optional:* Are there any special considerations, such as insistence by one's organization that a paper be presented to receive reimbursement for the costs of attending the meeting?

Please send five copies of the abstract, a computer diskette containing the abstract (ideally in Microsoft Word format), curricula vitae of all authors, and a covering letter to: Charles S. Bryan, Secretary-Treasurer, American Osler Society, Two Medical Park, Suite 502, Columbia, SC 29203. Again, the deadline for receipt is 15 November 2004.