[Lady Osler to Mrs. Chapin]

Sunday 4. PM 17th [Jan., 1915]
In the drawing room!

Dear Sister

I feel that my last letters have seemed rather curt and unsatisfactory and I often think my letters must really not contain what you would most like to know.- Views & opinions about the War and the progress - or whatever it may be. It is very difficult not to be personal because I have no one else and you understand. One can hardly realize this is the first Sunday in a New Term - Were it not for this nice, comfy house I should like to go away & not see Oxford until it is all over - for it is so pathetic. The Situation in the University grows serious - The Income being entirely cut down in certain directions - Fees for degrees - Entrance fees - tutors fees & many others. There are large numbers of men quartered in colleges and the Regiment or Gov pay for that - so that is a source of income. And the same way in lodgings, otherwise the lodging keepers would be lost. Four thousand soldiers keep money circulating in the Town but also many unpleasant things circulating. Very Tra-la-la looking girls and gayer looking ladies - but one never really knows. I sent a letter to Ned yesterday trying to explain about Revere - A cable came from Dr Birkett saying for him to get training in [a] Military Hospital to be his Private orderly - So Willie thought he better work in College & the training Corps until the letters came & dates etc settled - & probably he could arrange the Commission for the Canadian Corps more easily from this College Corps. I hope it will all work out well & he may be satisfied - if so we shall be quite satisfied - I think you will understand this explanation. Bobbie lunched here today & no one else. We had a cosey time and W.O gave the boys information on the subject of Thyroid & other glands - telling it in rather an interesting, practical way that interested them. We are having the first glorious day for weeks - clear & fresh with no wind - The floods have gone down. W.O has been two days on Salisbury Plain seeing the Hospitals & sick men. They have had a ghastly time there I can tell you & Willie says he has not seen such mud since he was a boy. The winter really could not have been worse. I sent you a Red + report which seemed to me very interesting - I have just gone on the Red + Board - and got it at the first Meeting. All these private Hospitals seem so wonderful. The Singer one is the best in this neighborhood. The Harcourts have wounded Belgian Officers at Nuneham. Mrs H- has just telephoned me to know whatever she shall do with an officer's wife & children who have arrived in their village and not a spot for them & they speak no English. Each day something happens like that. Mrs Somerville had a Belgian last weekend - a woman from Louvain looking for her son - a wounded soldier & all she heard was he had been sent to England. She started to search & found him in our Hospital - She arrived with 4 francs, fortunately Monica had seen the man & got her mother to take the mother. This Red + branch covers the County of Oxford - and at the meeting were so many mothers whose hearts must have been splitting with sorrow and yet so good & plucky - plodding on - doing for others - you know -

Fancy what a nice thing happened yesterday. Bob Bacon telephoned from Nuneham to know if he might call at 4 o'clk. He came and stayed 2 hours nearly. He was perfectly charming & so full of interesting experiences - He says he shall burst if he doesn't get into kahki. Really Martha has been simply wonderful - in the raising of money & he says Mrs Harry P. Whitney has given or spent about $275,000. Every one says the Neuilly Hospital is a wonder & now they have another ready to open near Soissons & Ambulances without number. Bob says he flies back & forth from Paris to London helping as he can - He knows he ought

to go home but simply can't now, must stay & help. He has been trying to get the American Commission taking food to put him in the way of helping the French - back of the German line - who no one else can reach, ~~them.~~ Bob of course was very blue about this "American Note" & shipping business - of course does not at all approve of Wilson - I feel very uneasy about it but do not mention it to any one - Certainly no one but a pro German could expect England to let copper go by here bound for Germans -

Wanda M.M and I were quite depressed by a letter she had from Nina Moltke & thought it very pro German but Mrs M.M. thought it only diplomatic. The M.M children are such bright spots - They adore Willie and come in constantly - calling out "William, where are you?"

Really Sue, Miss Danielsons things are wonderful - & that Mrs Walker from Manchester by the Sea - dont forget to tell me who she is - Many cold Belgians are having the splendid blankets & 12 have gone to a Hospital for wounded French. The enclosed is from a charming lady who has charge of 3 children & I sent some of the delicious "Bunny blankets." Madame Persyn the wife of a Professor from Ghent is having a baby the 15th of February - already 5 children under 6 1/2 - I have the money for her to stay in the Acland Home 4 weeks - but do not expect she will be willing - Everything is ready - She came with her husband to see the things & wept. I have that little old fashion[ed] trunk of Aunt Nan's lined with pink sateen & a slip over of grey with a pink rose - a basket covered with the same and everything in white and pink - Miss Danielson's baby bundles provided so much - it has cost very little. You may hear from President Lowell about a Professor who is going to Harvard. I have written him to find out where and how they can live. His name is Dupriez - and I believe another Prof goes at the same time - He goes to lecture in Law - & stay until summer. They are living at Cambridge [Eng.] but came to see me about going over & to see a wounded friend in the Hospital. Madam Dupriez speaks English nicely & is quite attractive. They have four children, & insist on taking them too. I have tried to persuade her to leave them or stay with them here & let him go - but she will not. They are sailing on the St Louis Feb- 6th I think & I shall ask Sallie & Mabel Fitzgerald to meet them & start them for Boston & I thought if Sallie wired you - you would help them to Cambridge - & told Mr Lowell to let you know where they would be going - I shall write more about it later -

Here is a wire from Norman at Liverpool - come to look for a job - Poor Willie - he never has a chance to breathe he is so busy helping - Also his interest in the wounds - & results of wounds is intense - I think the new Edition of the Practice of Medicine will be a War Volume - with medical wounds - He is all the time urging men on about History of cases - & is having a campaign on typhoid inoculation - All these things read as though you would find us living on the edge of a volcano of excitement and yet it really doesn't seem so.

Tuesday Norman arrived looking so well & very bright - he will soon have something to do in a Military Hospital - It is probably settled for Revere most satisfactorily - He will go to the Military Hospital at the Astor's place - which will be opened in ten days - Help with the organization - under a good man - Get an excellent training & be ready to join Dr Birkett as his private orderly officer when he comes. He is very pleased - and W.O more than

thankful - They have 200 beds, ambulances etc. It seems a very good start and a chance for Revere to learn a lot and give out a great deal too in time. They hope to be established in France as a Base Hospital - I am so relieved and thankful it is settled at least it seems to - If the question is asked of what he is doing you can say - preparing to be on the McGill Staff - By-bye

Aff^ly

Grace.

Please send this to Marjorie.