diary cited, but the closing year of this volume’s survey (1844) produced 27 diarists. The trickle was about to become a Niagara as the nineteenth century increasingly used the diary as a wonderful literary exercise. Latterly the people who kept diaries are more diverse as well as less known or even totally unknown. Where the early centuries provide diaries kept principally by explorers, mariners, soldiers, clerics and missionaries, politicians and Puritans, colonists and Quakers, the later ones show not only more varied professions and vocations, such as the physicians and the surveyors, but also reveal the private impressions of more humble settlers and emigrants, sportsmen, and even socialites. Wars certainly seem to stimulate the diarist, or perhaps they simply spur later generations to preserve their forebears’ records; the year 1776 on the evidence of this book produced a plump harvest of 120 items. The other major fillip to journalizing is provided by travel. Since diarists of the last century were wont to publish privately their own travel impressions, the present volume’s cut-off date partially obscures for the moment the multitude of such ephemera.

The apparatus of this book does tempt one to browse, fortunately. There are three indexes: the simple name index is supplemented by a geographical index and a subject index. These last two are bibliographical advances on Matthews’ book. The last is certainly a fascinating tool, though Canadian readers will need to exercise restraint; there is, for example, no entry under ‘Fenians’ or ‘rebellion,’ or even under ‘Upper Canada’ or ‘Lower Canada.’ The limitation seems to be that the index is heavily reliant upon the key word search of the computer programme rather than that of the scholar. As the editors disclaim comprehensiveness, it might be churlish to do other than mention that the subject index is suggestive rather than exhaustive.

The only reservation I have about the work as a whole stems from the editors’ conviction that judgement of significance is ‘perilously subjective.’ Where Matthews in his annotations had been bold enough to call a dull diary ‘dull,’ the present trio have ‘largely avoided negative assessments ... preferring to leave such judgements up to the reader.’ Granted that there are special difficulties involved when the criterion is collectively assumed, it is surely a matter of regret that some indication of relative worth / worthlessness has not been given; the proper exercise of editorial authority might have warned readers of the fruitless, frustratingly empty diary.

The book is obviously priced for the reference-library market, but it is well bound and uses tolerably heavy paper. It will be of use to all those who wish to take an intimate look at personal and local American history in bygone days and who need some guidance on where to start.

JOHN STUART BATTs
(John Stuart Batts is Associate Professor of English at the University of Ottawa and author of British Manuscript Diaries of the Nineteenth Century.)


Sir William Osler (1849-1919) remains Canada’s most famous man of medicine. Born at Bond Head, Ontario, and educated at McGill University, he spent most of his
professional life in America and England, finally becoming Regius Professor of Medi-
cine at Oxford. Throughout his career he was an ardent bibliophile and book collect-
stor, amassing a large and valuable collection. After his death, this collection was
housed in the Osler Library, McGill University, and it was the occasion of the 50th
anniversary of the library that prompted these essays.

Those unversed in the history of medicine or medical bibliography need not fear
arcane discourses on unpronounceable subjects. These essays have more to do with
bibliography in general than medical history, and were written by bibliographers and
librarians, not historians.

Following a biographical sketch of Osler’s bibliographic activities are four short
essays dealing with medical bibliography, past and present. Richard Durling presents
an account of his research on medieval manuscripts, pointing out the bibliographic
tools available to scholars in the field. While this is the most specialized essay, it may
give others a feel for the problems encountered and the bibliographic work yet to be
done in this area of the history of medicine. Turning to a very different bibliographic
problem, Estelle Broadman reviews the last seventy years of enumerative bibliogra-
phy, tracing the growth of Index Medicus, MEDLARS, and other attempts to organize
the vastness of modern medical literature. The history of analytical and descriptive
bibliography is undertaken by Thomas Tanselle, but from a literary point of view,
since, as he points out, descriptive bibliography of scientific material is practically
nonexistent. Finally, Eric Freeman of the Wellcome Library of the History of Medi-
cine tries to find common ground where the historian, librarian, and bibliographer
should meet—a lamentably rare occurrence.

This book of essays, while necessarily somewhat superficial in covering such
extensive territory, is nevertheless an attempt to provide this common ground. Sir
William Osler, who was above all a catalyst for others’ activities as well as an
enthusiast himself, would have been pleased with this effort.

The style is generally informal and accessible, and adequate footnotes are pro-
vided.
M.L. RUSSELL
(M.L. Russell, Assistant Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto, has a long-
standing interest in the history of medicine.)

The Canadian Military Experience 1867-1983: A Bibliography /
2nd ed. Department of National Defence, Directorate of History,
Monograph Series No. 2. Ottawa: Directorate of History, Department of

O.A. Cooke has produced a revised, updated edition of his bibliography that was first
published in 1979 and covered the period 1867-1967. It consists of an unannotated
checklist of approximately 2500 entries grouped under six main headings. Two short
opening sections deal first with Bibliography, and then Defense Policy and General
Works. The majority of items are arranged under the headings Naval Forces, Land
Forces, and Air Forces and are subdivided chronologically by historical period. A
new concluding section contains titles relating to the unified services since 1968.