Harvey (Williams) Cushing: Dr. Elliott C. Cutler 475

The Present State of Solar Activity and Associated Phenomena: Dr. Harlan T. Stetson 482

Scientific Events:
A Discussion of Franklin and His Times; The Eighth American Scientific Congress; Awards of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers; Award of the Willard Gibbs Medal. Recent Deaths 484

Scientific Notes and News 487

Discussion:
The Founding of a Department of Fishes in the Museo Paez of the University of Haugna: Correspondent. A Noteworthy Aurora: Dr. S. Stillman Berry. Ozone in the '38 Hurricane: Professor Charles A. Peters. The International Union of Chemistry: Professor Marston Taylor Bogert 490

Scientific Books:
Recent Books in Geology: Professor Kirtley F. Mather 492

Societies and Meetings:
The Semi-centennial Celebration of the Medical School of the University of Minnesota: Dr. M. B. Visscher 494

Special Articles:
Toxic Effects of Desoxycorticosterone Esters in Dogs: Dr. Robert F. Loeb and Others. The Encephalitogenic Property of Herpes virus: Katherine Anderson. The Chemical Composition of Suckleyana: Dr. C. G. Barr, Dr. H. W. Reuszer and Dr. Frank Thorp, Jr. Experimental Chronic Cadmium Poisoning: Dr. Robert H. Wilson and Dr. Floyd DeEds 496

Science News 10

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HARVEY (WILLIAMS') CUSHING
April 8, 1869—October 7, 1939

By Dr. Elliott C. Cutler

Harvard Medical School and Peter Bent-Brigham Hospital

Honour a physician with the honour due unto him for the uses which ye may have of him: for the Lord hath created him. For of the most High cometh healing, and he shall receive honour of the king. The skill of the physician shall lift up his head: and in the sight of great men he shall be in admiration.—Book of Ecclesiastes, Chapter 38, Verses 1-3. Being the First Lesson for St. Luke's Day.

No other individual in modern medicine has revealed such a variety of accomplishments as Harvey Cushing: master-surgeon, neurologist, physician, critical investigator, medical bibliophile, inspiring teacher, litterateur, artist! His craftsmanship and technical performance in surgery were superb; his precise exploration of the nervous system made him an eminent neurologist; his care of and interest in his patients were an example for the most devoted family physician and brought to him the faith and love of patients above what is accorded most physicians; his curiosity led him to an interest in original sources and a love of books which resulted in his amassing a great medical library and becoming one of the leading medical historians of his day; his scientific medical contributions form an important background in neurophysiology and endo-

1 The Williams, his maternal ancestor's name, was finally dropped after his settling in Boston in 1912, where his mail often became confused with that of a surgical colleague, Dr. Hayward Warren Cushing. But an even earlier episode had warned him of this difficulty, for in 1895 when he had taken the examination for house-pupil at the Massachusetts General Hospital, he failed to hear the result for a long time after the other candidates had been notified. Investigation revealed that his notice of successful application, which seemed all-important to him at that time, had been forwarded to the same Dr. Hayward Warren Cushing, one of the most promising younger surgeons of Boston. This first incident was probably a major influence in his dropping the use of his middle name in his publications as early as 1900.