

A. J. Cairns's Diary

January 23, 1929

LONDON

Personal errands in a.m.

Hugh Cairns

at his house, 26 Norfolk Road, St-John's Wood, N.W.8
Small house. The meal was rather frugal in the living
room. Mrs. C. daughter of A.L. Smith, former master
of Balliol. She is the eighth of a family of nine, and
her hands testified to house-work. Their financial
position is roughly this: C. supports his parents to
the extent of about £200 a year. Income tax is 20% on
all amounts above £450 a year. They have three children,
the eldest six years old. In the two recent months
private cases urged upon C. have brought in £288. I
told C. that our object was to help him over the next 3
to 5 years in such a way that he would not have to take
outside work at the expense of his work at the London
Hospital. We did not expect him to effect *reactionary revolution*
reorganization in the hospital but merely to do the best
that he could without the worry of supporting his father
and mother and his family. If private cases which were
interesting and useful for his own training and experience
were available and if he received important sums from them
this money might fairly be deducted from the amount which
we would otherwise contribute. This agreement, of course,
was contingent upon his remaining on hospital work. He
asked in what way could he secure assistance (anaesthetist,
histological investigator, surgical assistant, etc.) I
said that Ellis had indicated the willingness to allocate
funds at present being paid him directly and that though
I did not want to present a definite request, nevertheless,
I thought that Sir W. Fletcher would probably help. Knutsford
to see the advantages of a friendly attitude on the part
of the hospital. Emphasized the importance of his
thinking of the eventual implications and repercussions
of what he did and the way he did it. Important to
think two jumps ahead of what he is doing. The senior
surgeon in whose ward C's beds are situated, and who has
been bluff and critical of him has nevertheless advised a
junior in his firm to go to the U.S. for further surgical
training. I think this is a recognition, in a rather
striking way of what C. has accomplished thus far. Rigby
discussed the subject of mixed infection in surgical
wounds recently with C. Apparently this was a
difficulty with the recent Royal empyema.

I got a very favourable impression of C. and of his
work and prospects.

HolA
Cairns