

*Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, 8 January 1938*

My dear Sigerist,

Many thanks for your letter of Dec. 20 & for the book "Socialised Medicine in the Soviet Union".<sup>1</sup> I have read it & – I assure you, I write with the traditional & conventional compliment – with the utmost interest. It is really a most fascinating piece of work which is far more easily read than I could have hoped for such a theme.

And may I congratulate you also on have [sic] not only acquired English perfectly – that you already had – but on having acquired a distinctive & most attractive English style. The Introduction is a particularly good bit of writing & I appreciate especially the simplicity of your diction. I can only say Well done!

For my own part I am satisfied that you have produced a work which will last longer than we shall, as the first attempt to produce a complete picture of a profession at work in a Socialist state. I have read criticisms of the book with which however, I do not agree. The only criticism that I have to make is perhaps no criticism at all. I could have wished that you had more of a picture of the Russian doctor himself: how his day goes; what he is thinking about; what it must feel like to be a Russian doctor; how he himself, regards the changes that are going on around him; in fact the personal & perhaps the sentimental side.

I should have written to you long ago, but I do assure you that my correspondence has grown beyond all management. I have been overwhelmed with the claims upon me of every kind made & the great German migration of intellectuals. I am very closely in touch with German exiles on the one hand & with Church circles (Fancy!) on the other. I am quite sure that you would never have thought that of me! I do a good deal of writing almost entirely anonymously, on the subject in various journals. I have just issued, however, a pamphlet in my own name which I enclose.<sup>2</sup> I am working in association with the bishop of Chichester, a level headed & humane man who knows perfectly well what is going on in Germany.<sup>3</sup> For various reasons it was considered advisable that this particular pamphlet should not be anonymous. It has, I am told, had a good deal of effect.

Personally I keep very well though beginning to feel older.<sup>4</sup> The events of the last years have made me work much harder than I ever expected to do again. Even my everlasting task of the History of Science has progressed.<sup>5</sup> My partner in it, Daniel [sic] McKie, has just left here after a few days spent on it & we now have it all written except the last chapter.<sup>6</sup>

You will have had news of us from the Larkeys at Prague. I sent him some notes for his work a few weeks ago but I have long ago despaired of ever getting an answer from him!

It is really good of you to see Weinbaum. He is an excellent man & one of the few exiles of whom you can say that his English is perfect. His is a type of scholarship that is rare in America but alas! I fear that the demand for it is rarer still.

I have had a couple of letters from a man named Kagan who is writing a life of Garrison.<sup>7</sup> I gather that he is not much good & has had a row with the Welch Medical Library. However[,] I did not see why I should not write a few lines about poor old Garrison for him & this I have done. I hope that you approve.

I have within the last few hours made an interesting little discovery. You remember the figure of the bees on one Xmas card from Stelluti's *Persio Tradotto* of 1630.<sup>8</sup> I knew that it was taken from Cesi's single sheet *Apiarium* of the supposedly unique copy in the Lancisian library at Rome, I have a photo.<sup>9</sup> Well another imperfect copy has just turned up in England and now lies on my table. It belongs to a bee-keepers association. But what surprised me was the degree of magnification – at least 30[?] diameters. I had no idea that it was so much. I am writing an account of the whole story with figures.<sup>10</sup>

With all good wishes to you all – & especially the children – from us all for a happy new year,  
Yours ever,  
Charles Singer

An American edition of my pamphlet is appearing

<sup>1</sup> Sigerist (1937b).

<sup>2</sup> Charles Singer, *The Christian approach to Jews*, with a foreword by the Rt. Rev. the Lord Bishop of Chichester; and a preface by the Rev. H. W. Fox. (London: [s.n.], 1937).

<sup>3</sup> George Kennedy Allen Bell (1883–1958), bishop of Chichester; see Andrew Chandler, 'Bell, George Kennedy Allen (1883–1958)', *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), vol. 4, 927–930.

<sup>4</sup> Singer was 61.

<sup>5</sup> Charles Singer, *A short history of science to the nineteenth century* (Oxford, 1941).

<sup>6</sup> Douglas McKie (1896–1967) British historian of science; see Harold Hartley, 'McKie, Douglas (1896–1967)', rev. *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), vol.35, 639–640.

<sup>7</sup> Solomon R. Kagan (1881–1955); Solomon R. Kagan, *Life and letters of Fielding H. Garrison* (Boston: The Medico-Historical Press, 1938).

<sup>8</sup> Francesco Stelluti (1577–1652) Italian scientist; Francesco Stelluti, *Persio/tradotto in verso* (Roma, 1630).

<sup>9</sup> Federico Cesi (1585–1630) Italian botanist; *Apiarium* is his work on bees. See Stillman Drake, 'Cesi, Federico', *Complete dictionary of scientific biography*, Vol. 3, (Detroit: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2008), 179–180.

<sup>10</sup> This account by Singer has not been published.

252

*Sigerist to Singer, Baltimore?, 31 January 1938*

My dear Singer:

Many thanks for your letter of January 8. Dr. Weinbaum was here a week ago and I was delighted to meet him. There is no doubt that he is a fascinating personality and a very fine scholar. I am sure that he will have a good career in this country because he has the type of personality that appeals to the Americans and is very adaptable to new environments. As a matter of fact, I believe that he already has a definite offer for a job in one of the good colleges of the country.

I greatly appreciated your very kind and generous comments on my last book.<sup>1</sup> I have no difficulties in speaking English but writing is a different matter and I still feel tremendously handicapped. It can not be helped, however, and I still have to learn to improve my style.

Dr. Solomon R. Kagan is not known to any of us. He has written not only a biography of Garrison but also one of Dr. Welch and if you or I should die tomorrow, he would probably write our biographies also.<sup>2</sup> We all felt that he was not qualified to write the biography of Garrison as he knew him only very superficially, and most of us refused to give him material as it might forestall a more competent publication. He succeeded, however, in obtaining some material from Mrs. Garrison<sup>3</sup> who is utterly helpless in such matters.

You undoubtedly know that Simon Flexner is writing the life of Dr. Welch and it obviously is absurd for a man like Kagan to try to compete, particularly as Flexner has all the biographical material on Welch in hand.<sup>4</sup>

Do you know J. G. Crowther?<sup>5</sup> He happens to be in America and we hope to have him give a lecture in the Institute. I liked his last books very much indeed.

I just made reservations for sailing on the Statendam on June 3. We shall land in Plymouth and if you happen to be in the country at that time, we would very much like to pay you a short visit.

With kind regards to Mrs. Singer and yourself, I am

Yours ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

<sup>1</sup> Sigerist (1937b).

<sup>2</sup> Kagan (1938), and 'William Henry Welch (1850–1934)', in Solomon R. Kagan, *Leaders of medicine*, (Boston: Medico-Historical Press, 1941), 127–161.

<sup>3</sup> Clara Garrison.

<sup>4</sup> Simon Flexner (1863–1946), American pathologist and bacteriologist, disciple of Welch; Simon Flexner and James T. Flexner, *William Henry Welch and the heroic age of American medicine* (New York, 1941). For Flexner see George W. Corner, 'Flexner, Simon', *Complete dictionary of scientific biography*, Vol. 5 (Detroit: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2008), 39–41.

<sup>5</sup> James G. Crowther (1899–1983) British journalist, wrote on science, scientists, and science policy. See Jane Gregory, 'Crowther, James Gerald (1899–1983)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); online edn, May 2007 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/94975>, accessed 27 July 2010].

253

*Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, 17 February 1938*

My dear Sigerist,

Many thanks for your letter of Jan. 31st. I quite agree with you that Kagan is a nuisance. Correspondence with him has already taken up too much of my time. I shall have his letters unanswered.

I am so glad that there is a chance of your having J. G. Crowther with you; he really is a most able, interesting & charming fellow. He is, I think, sure to be a success. He is quite our best scientific journalist & will one day, I hope, be editor of Nature.<sup>1</sup> Incidentally he has a perfectly delightful German wife.

It really ought not to be difficult to place Weinbaum. He has so many qualities that are in demand in the U.S.A.

1938

By the way you write "If you or I die tomorrow Kagan would probably write our biographies". This adds a new terror to death &, incidentally, a motive for trying to out-live Kagan! I, at any rate, mean to do my best.

It is delightful news that we may see you soon after June 3. To judge by the present state of Europe, England & Russia are probably the only states that you will be able to visit. We are normally in London about June 3 but would tremendously like to have you here & shall get back for a few days for the purpose – but of that more later. Do bring the children too.

I write this as the news comes in of the surrender of Austria.<sup>2</sup> Isn't it all beastly & what can our rotten Government be thinking about!

Yours ever,  
Charles Singer

<sup>1</sup> Britain's leading science journal

<sup>2</sup> Hitler's incorporation of Austria into the Reich

254

*Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, 5 April 1938*

My dear Sigerist,

You are to be congratulated on being in the United States. The situation here becomes daily worse. I cannot myself see any reason why European civilisation should survive.

I wonder if you are contemplating going to the Historical Congress at Zurich in September? Everything is so uncertain that no one likes to make arrangements six months in advance, and among the uncertain places I suppose that German Switzerland ranks pretty high!<sup>1</sup> Of course, if there is a Congress held in Zurich it will be under the most extreme German influence, and will be flooded out by Germans. If you are thinking of going there, it would be well that you should be primed on a number of matters. Perhaps therefore, you would be so good as to let me have a line as to your intentions. In any event we look forward to seeing you in June. We should love to see you either in London or in Cornwall, though, of course, we should prefer the latter.

With all good wishes,  
Yours ever,  
Charles Singer

<sup>1</sup> Hitler's initial goal was to be ruler of all germanophones, thus, there was fear that after Austria he would seize the German-speaking part of Switzerland too.

*Sigerist to Singer, Baltimore?, 18 May 1938*

Dear Singer:

I postponed writing you until I knew what our definite plans would be. For a while it looked as if I would have to go to Paris first and from there to England. Our present plans, however, are the following:

We sail from New York on June 3 on the Statendam on the Holland America Line and we are due in Plymouth on Friday, June 10, I think in the afternoon. Nothing could give us greater pleasure than to spend the week-end with you in Cornwall. We shall be the four of us – Mrs. Sigerist, myself, and the two girls.<sup>1</sup> I have been looking forward to a visit with you at your Cornwall home for many years and it will be a very great pleasure indeed to have a few quiet days with you in the country. There are so many things that I would like to discuss with you and Mrs. Singer.

I sincerely hope that nothing will interfere [sic] with our plans and I shall confirm the date of our arrival by cable just before we sail. The week of June 13 to 18, we intend to spend in London and we have made reservations in a boarding house. My mother will join us in London for a few days.<sup>2</sup> On June 18 I shall sail from London to the Soviet Union on the Soviet boat with Erica and the group of American physicians and public health people. We are going to have a travel seminar on public health. I am sending you enclosed a copy of the program.

I intend to spend August in Switzerland and in September I am thinking of going to the International Medical History Congress in Yugoslavia.

I do not contemplate going to the historical congress at Zürich. One congress a year is more than I can stand. I think Switzerland is pretty safe, however, and the Nazis are not popular in Zürich. Well, we can talk this matter over.

We made an interesting experiment at the Institute the other day which, I am glad to say, succeeded very well indeed. We gave a one week's post-graduate course in medical history.<sup>3</sup> It was attended by 35 doctors, mostly people who teach medical history in their schools, and also some medical librarians. I am sending you under separate cover the various programs. The whole Week was so successful that we intend to give similar courses regularly, and I think that this is a good way of raising the standard gradually.

I had a frightfully busy winter and I am beginning to feel very tired. I am looking forward with greatest pleasure to a few days of rest and particularly to seeing you and Mrs. Singer again very soon.

With kind regards, I am  
Yours very sincerely,  
Henry E. Sigerist<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> His daughters Erica (20) and Nora (16).

<sup>2</sup> Emma Sigerist-Wiskemann, living in Basel, Switzerland.

<sup>3</sup> See Henry E. Sigerist, 'Report of the activities of the Institute of the History of Medicine of the Johns Hopkins University (1937–1938)', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 1938, 6: 858–881.

1938

<sup>4</sup>The following letter (255A) from Sigerist to Dorothea Singer is held in the Wellcome Library, London (PP/CJS/A.16). Sigerist was then in London to board the boat for Leningrad for his third and last study tour in the USSR. June 18 1938

Hotel Russell, Russell Square, London, W.C.1

Dear Mrs Singer

I hoped to be able to see you once more before leaving but I was so busy with the preparations for the trip that I just could not make it. And—needless to say—the preface for the Neuberger Festschrift will have to be written on the boat.

I wish to tell you what a very great pleasure it was to see you and Dr Singer again and how much we all appreciated your charming hospitality. The reception at the club was delightful and made me realise that some other year I will have to stay much longer in London

With all good wishes to yourself and Dr Singer I am

Yours sincerely

H. E. Sigerist

256

*Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, 21 November 1938*

My dear Sigerist,

Going over some papers today I came upon a long letter from Garrison which I gladly present to be added to the Johns Hopkins collection. It refers to my suggestions for his book but also contains more interesting material.<sup>1</sup> Like everything else it is safer on your side of the Atlantic.

What an awful situation we are in. It is, if anything, more difficult to do any serious work than it was before. I often think that we must add to the direct destruction of civilisation for which Hitler is responsible, the much greater destruction involved in withdrawing the attention of all serious workers from their proper tasks. I had a long talk with Freud three days ago.<sup>2</sup> He says that he is confident that Hitler is insane in the technical sense. He says, however, that his type of insanity is not, unfortunately, likely to lead soon to a state of confusion. Of course if it did it would become obvious to all, even to Germans. But after having seen much of Germans I have at last, arrived at the generalisation that they are, one & all, damn fools!

What a wonderful old man Freud is.

Yours always

Charles Singer

We are not sending out Xmas cards this year. It would be almost indecent.

<sup>1</sup>Fielding H Garrison, *An introduction to the history of medicine* (Philadelphia/London, 1913).

<sup>2</sup>Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) Austrian neurologist and psychiatrist, 1938 exiled in England. see Susan Austin, 'Freud, Sigmund (1856–1939)', *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), vol. 21, 3–11.

*Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, 11 January 1939*

My dear Sigerist,

Neuburger has written a very distressing letter to the Society for the Protection of Science & Learning. The Society exists, of course, for what its name implies & can only exceptionally give superannuation pensions. Neuburger's own pension in Vienna has been withdrawn & he is destitute. D'Arcy Power & I are trying to do something for him. We are hoping to raise £180 a year to be paid him in England until one of his sons is in a position to support him. We shall give it through the Society.

My first thought was Klebs & Sir D'Arcy agreed to write to him. He got back a letter which (as you would expect) was a model of bad taste!, but I think Klebs will give something. D'Arcy is now writing again to ask him to give 25 pounds a year. D'Arcy is also writing to Cushing, Fulton & St.Clair Thomson. I have undertaken to write to you, H. H. Dale, Chaplin Moon[,] Cawadias & Packard.<sup>1</sup> I am giving five guineas a year & would gladly give more but have for the last 6 years been living far beyond my income by reason of refugee claims & we have guaranteed seven exiles I just simply cannot do more & remain solvent.

I have suggested to Dale that the Wellcome Museum take on Neuburger.<sup>2</sup> It won't get a more learned man. Of course if this should come off and a salary be provided, anything given for Neuburger will be returned to the donors. It is also possible that one of Neuburger's sons may be able to support him. But in the meantime Neuburger cannot wait & something must be done for him.

Do you know whether Mrs. Neuburger is still alive? It makes a difference, of course, because if she is we must manage to find £250 a year instead of £180.

All our time, energy & means has now, for years, been given to helping exiles. The European situation is now so bad that it is very doubtful if we shall, for much longer, be able to do anything at all for them. The general indications seem to point to a war in the spring. This cannot be much worse than the present state.

All good wishes to you all from us all.

Yours ever,  
Charles Singer

We felt that we really could not send out Xmas cards this year.

If you think of anyone else for D'Arcy or me to write to, of course we would do so.

<sup>1</sup> John F. Fulton, (1899–1960), Yale University physiologist and medical historian; see A. Earl Walker, 'Fulton, John Farquhar', *Complete dictionary of scientific biography*, Vol. 5 (Detroit: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2008), 207–208. St.Clair Thomson, (1859–1943) British laryngologist; see Neil Weir, 'Thomson, Sir St Clair (1859–1943)', *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), vol. 54, 553–554. Henry H. Dale (1875–1968), English pharmacologist, Nobel Prize winner; see W. Feldberg, 'Dale, Sir Henry Hallett (1875–1968)', rev. E. M. Tansey, *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), vol. 14, 929–932. Chaplin Moon not identified; A. P. Cawadias, British endocrinologist, see 'Alexander Polycleitos Cawadias', in Gordon Wolstenholme (ed.), *Lives of the Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians*, (Oxford: IRL Press, 1982), vol 6, 95–96. Francis R. Packard (1870–1950), Medical historian; see

W. B. McDaniel II, 'Francis R. Packard and his role in medical historiography', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 1951, 25: 66–85.

<sup>2</sup> Wellcome Museum of the History of Medicine in London.

258

*Sigerist to Singer, Baltimore?, 3 February 1939*

Dear Singer:

I have to thank you for several letters and first for your letter of November 21. The letter of Garrison is most welcome and I am glad to add it to our collections.

The European situation could not possibly be worse and if Spain breaks down, we shall have to take care of an additional number of refugees. It happens that almost all scientists are on the Loyalist side.<sup>1</sup>

You certainly remember Starkenstein, the pharmacologist of Prague?<sup>2</sup> We are just making arrangements for a lecture tour for him, and I am confident that we shall be able to place him in America permanently. He is a very delightful personality and pharmacologists are the easiest to place as there is always some possible outlet in industry.

Castiglioni is also trying to come over. It seems that he has some money abroad but the great difficulty is to obtain a visa for him. He is too old for a regular academic position and visitors' visas are generally refused now.<sup>3</sup>

I would like to recommend you an Italian roentgenologist, Dr. Giuseppe Bertel most warmly. He was a student of Holzknacht<sup>4</sup> and had the best possible training a roentgenologist can have. He then worked for a number of years at the University of Modena where I met him several years ago. I was favorably impressed by him. I hear that he is going to appeal to the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning and I hope that you can do something for him, at least in the beginning. I hope that we can place him in America ultimately but it will take some time as he has no connections of any kind with the United States.

The case of Neuburger is very difficult indeed. Since last spring I had an endless correspondence concerning him. Everybody is most sympathetic but so far no university has been willing to do anything. The chief trouble is his old age and his difficult character.<sup>5</sup> He is embittered and has been so since the war so that he would not be a very pleasant man to have on the staff of a department. I could not possibly take him as I already have three Germans (Temkin, Edelstein and old Neustätter<sup>6</sup>). I cannot possibly crowd my department with refugees but must keep a few places for the training of young Americans.

I shall be very glad to pledge a hundred dollars a year for the support of Neuburger but I am sorry to say that I could not send you this year's contribution before autumn. I am perfectly broke just now. I gave every cent I could spare for refugees, for Spain, China, the Civil Liberties League, International Labor Protection and endless such organizations that do not get any support from rich people.

1939

I have just accepted a visiting lectureship in South Africa for next summer, 25 lectures in ten universities and colleges. They pay expenses and quite a decent honorarium so that in autumn I will be able to send you the money for Neuburger.

I am terribly busy this winter. In addition to my regular work, I am in the middle of the struggle for sickness insurance and have to make endless speeches before all kind of groups.

You will have heard that the two next International Congresses for the History of Medicine will be held in Berlin and Rome so that the International Society is now completely controlled by the Fascist powers. It is a hopeless situation.<sup>7</sup>

I very much hope to see you and Mrs. Singer either on my way to or from South Africa and with kind regards to you both, I am

Yours ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

<sup>1</sup> Spanish Civil War 1936–1939; Loyalists = Republicans, i.e. anti-fascists.

<sup>2</sup> Emil Starkenstein (1884–1942), German pharmacologist, murdered by the Nazis in 1942; see K. E. Senius, 'Emil Starkenstein 1884–1942. The life and work of a German pharmacologist', *Naunyn-Schmiedeberg's Archives of Pharmacology*, 1984, **328**: 95–102.

<sup>3</sup> Castiglioni was 65.

<sup>4</sup> Giuseppe Bertel (born 1894). Guido Holzknecht (1872–1931), Austrian radiologist; see Daniela Angetter, *Guido Holzknecht: Leben und Werk des österreichischen Pioniers der Röntgenologie* (Wien: Werner Eichbauer, 1998).

<sup>5</sup> Neuburger was 71.

<sup>6</sup> Otto Neustätter (born 1870), medical historian.

<sup>7</sup> The planned international congresses of medical history in Berlin and Rome did not take place on account of World War II.

259

*Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, 13 February 1939*

My dear Sigerist,

Thanks for yours of Feb. 3. You really are a good & generous fellow.

Improbable as it may seem, I really think there is a good chance of placing Neuburger! Your kind and generous offer may well help but I shall try to use it as a guarantee for I well know of the calls on you & want to lessen them.

As regards Starkenstein. Oddly enough I wrote only yesterday to Miss Layton, the secretary of the Czecho-Slovak Committee offering, if needed, to market parts of his library for him. I am glad to hear that there are prospects for him in U.S.A. You know, do you not, that we have in London fairly good funds for anyone expelled or forced to leave the old Czecho-Slovakia,<sup>1</sup> guaranteed without distinction of race, religion or politics by the British Government. Therefore if you hear of such cases let me know because they ought not to fall on ordinary refugee funds.

I will gladly do all I can for Giuseppe Bertel & have written immediately to the Soc. for the Protection of Science and Learning.

Again as to Neuburger. I think I have persuaded Wellcome<sup>2</sup> to take him on for a year & I am sure they will take him on for 6 months, [sic] As they pay at the rate of £200 for 6 months this should see him through a year. If they take him on for a year the pay (£200) should see him through for 2 years by when, if he (& we) are still alive his sons must care for him. But I will let you know how things go.

We do look forward to a visit from you on your way to Africa.<sup>3</sup> You are always more than welcome. I have reflected a hundred times what a good thing it is that they chose you and not me for Johns Hopkins.<sup>4</sup> For one thing you do it far better than I could. For another you are in a far stronger position to help colleagues than I should have been. More power to you! Of course I fully understand that you cannot take more exiles yourself.

Dorothea & I have now for years done nothing but work for exiles. There is in England a very great shortage of girls as hospital nurses & we have placed about 250 from Germany[.] There have not been 4 failures among the lot. We are now trying to place lads of about 16 as apprentices with farmers with a [...] to emigration at about 18 & are beginning to have some success.

I was asked to lecture on a "Hellenic Travellers Tour" in the Mediterranean this spring & thought of taking Nancy.<sup>5</sup> As the situation deteriorated I refused. I don't think the Eastern Mediterranean is likely to be a very healthy place this April, do you?

The general situation cannot well be worse. I always assume that there will be a European war opening about April or May but have, of course, no other source of information than you have.

With all kind wishes to you all,  
Yours ever,  
Charles Singer

I wonder if we could have an English Speaking Congress of the History of Medicine & so check mate the other?<sup>6</sup> We can talk of that when we meet on your way to Africa [.]

<sup>1</sup> Just before the German occupation in March 1939.

<sup>2</sup> The Wellcome Museum in London.

<sup>3</sup> To South Africa

<sup>4</sup> Singer was the first to be asked to succeed Welch.

<sup>5</sup> Nancy Singer.

<sup>6</sup> Congresses in Berlin and Rome.

260

*Sigerist to Singer, Baltimore?, 27 February 1939*

Dear Singer:

Many thanks for your letter of February 13. I was glad to hear that there is a possibility of employing Neuburger at the Wellcome Museum. They should be able to build up a

very competent staff under the present conditions. I heard that Walzer is already working there. He is a most competent young scholar; you must have met him.<sup>1</sup>

Your suggestion of an English-speaking congress of the history of medicine to check-mate the Nazi demonstration of 1940 appeals to me very much. As a matter of fact, I discussed the idea last summer already with several people. The International Congress of the History of Science was to be held in Lausanne in September 1940 and I planned to invite a number of people to the First International Conference of the History of Medicine to be held in Kastanienbaum preceding the Lausanne Congress. Kastanienbaum is our summer place on the Lake of Lucerne, and an enchanting spot with a very good and inexpensive hotel. I thought that we should invite a small group of really competent men to meet for a week and to discuss a definite problem from all angles. We then could publish the papers as a volume and I am sure it would infuriate the politicians of the International Society.

I have not done anything in the matter yet because Reymond is dying and the Congress of the History of Science will, in all probability, not be held in Lausanne.<sup>2</sup> But I was delighted to hear that you had the same idea and I think it is time that we do something in the matter. I am sick and tired of these big congresses anyway where you do nothing but eat and drink and listen to nationalistic propaganda. It is time to change the style of these gatherings and to organize some meetings where real work can be achieved.

With kind regards to you all, I am

Yours ever,  
Henry E. Sigerist

<sup>1</sup>Richard Rudolf Walzer (1900–1975), classical scholar and orientalist; see Luc Deitz, ‘Walzer, Richard Rudolf (1900–1975)’, *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), vol. 57, 231–232.

<sup>2</sup>Arnold Reymond (1874–1958), Swiss historian of science and Professor of Philosophy at the University of Lausanne; see Suzanne Delorme, ‘Nécrologie, Arnold Reymond (1874–1958)’, *Revue d’histoire des sciences et de leurs applications*, 1958, **11**: 171–174.

261

*Sigerist to Singer, Baltimore?, 1 March 1939*

Dear Singer:

I just received your letter of December 17.<sup>1</sup> Do not resign from the International Society of the History of Medicine. I think that the liberal members should stay by all means. We may have an opportunity to change the policy of the Society with the help of the Scandinavian members. This is why I accepted to be a vice-president. You will certainly be notified of your election as an honorary member but it takes time because the organization of the Society is perfectly rotten and the Secretary’s office most inefficient.

1939

In Sarajewo<sup>2</sup> nothing could be done, but you never can tell. Conditions may change and we may have an opportunity to act sometime.

Yours ever,  
Henry E. Sigerist

<sup>1</sup> Singer's letter is missing.

<sup>2</sup> At the International Congress of the History of Medicine in 1938.

262

*Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, 8 March 1939*

My dear Sigerist,

What about this man?<sup>1</sup> I said that I would see him when I am next in London. But the fact that he comes from Diepenbeek is not the best recommendation in my eyes! But of course he may be all right.

All kind wishes,  
Yours ever,  
Charles Singer

<sup>1</sup> Singer is referring to Philipsborn, see following letter.

263

*Sigerist to Singer, Baltimore?, 29 March 1939*

Dear Singer:

I have never met Dr. Alexander Philipsborn.<sup>1</sup> He was recommended to me by the same man who recommended him to you. He is working on a history of the hospital and apparently would like a fellowship that would allow him to continue his research in England or America. I have not succeeded in finding anything for him yet.

We are doing much work for the Spanish refugees now. I hope that South America will absorb most of them but there are a good many who would like to come to the United States. They are now in French concentration camps under appalling conditions.<sup>2</sup>

With kind regards, I am  
Yours ever,  
Henry E. Sigerist

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Philipsborn wrote on Byzantine medicine.

<sup>2</sup> Concentration camps in the literal, not in the Nazi sense.

264

*Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, 24 April 1939*

My dear Sigerist,

(1) Are you still of opinion that we should try to get an English-speaking Congress of the History of Science for 1940? If so drop me a line to that effect, to the Athenaeum Pall Mall SW. I go to London tomorrow for some weeks. If you agree & if you will support me, I will sound opinion in London. I have little doubt that we could get the hospitality of the Science Museum at South Kensington & I think probably a little government support if we needed it, though we are, perhaps, best without it. I propose it should be a meeting only for “serious” workers & not for all & sundry[?].

(2) Do you know anything of Arcieri who has just started this journal “Alcmeone”.<sup>1</sup> Pure propaganda, I suppose. I imagine that he is a little mad. He wrote to the Senate of the University of London asking “What religion is professed by Professor Singer?”!! Of course the Senate made no reply & sent the letter on to me! I did the same. What a mad world.

Yours ever,

Charles Singer

The pathetic little autobiography of Garrison in the Bulletin. Certainly revealing & some fine thoughts in it.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Giovanni Arcieri (born 1897) Italian medical historian; his journal existed from 1939 to 1951; see also letter 268.

<sup>2</sup>F. L. Tietsch, ‘Self-portrait of Fielding H. Garrison. Autobiographical excerpts compiled from his letters’, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 1939, 7: 365–373.

265

*Singer to Sigerist, London, 8 May 1939*

My dear Sigerist

(1) I have been asked by the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning to find out what has become of Starkenstein of Prague. Can you let me have his address and his office if any. I think you said he had found a place somewhere in USA

(2) I saw Adams the other day.<sup>1</sup> He would be willing to be again the Hon. Secretary of an “English Speaking Congress of the History of Science, Medicine and Technology” in London in 1940. But I want your imprimatur & the information that you will support it before I go further.

Yours ever

Charles Singer

1939

<sup>1</sup> Walter Adams (1906–1975), university administrator, then secretary of the London School of Economics; Adams had been the Honorary Secretary of the Second International Congress of the History of Science and Technology held in London in 1931. See James Joll, 'Adams, Sir Walter (1906–1975)', rev. *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), vol. 1, 267–268.

266

*Singer to Sigerist, London, 10 May 1939*

My dear Sigerist,

The second part of the enclosed letter from H. P. Bayon may interest you.<sup>1</sup> (The first part is of no importance.) I should like to have your reaction ct.

Bayon is a very learned & worthy man, extremely honest, endlessly industrious & with a perfect mania for accuracy. He used to have a post in the Pathological department at Cambridge from which he has recently retired – he is about 65 & now devotes himself to history for which he is well equipped. Despite his name, he is, I believe, by birth an Italian. His very clever and charming daughter is married to P.M.S. Blackett the distinguished physicist.<sup>2</sup>

I think, in fact, Bayon would do Garrison's book as well as most people.<sup>3</sup> He would certainly correct the errors! He would need to be restrained from further extending the size of the book but I have always found him willing to take suggestions & amenable to guidance. His worst feature is a wearisome literary style in which every statement is qualified with a qualification to the qualificature! But I think that I could restrain him & if you have no better suggestion, I think Bayon could hardly be bettered for the wearisome task of revising Garrison. Bayon, I should add, is certainly modest & humble minded.

Let me hear from you as soon as you can on the project[?] of an English speaking Congress. I will see if the Wellcome Foundation will support it.

Yours ever,  
Charles Singer

<sup>1</sup> Enrico Pietro (Henry Peter) Bayon (1876–1952), pathologist, linguist and medical historian; see 'H. P. G. Bayon', *British Medical Journal*, 1952, ii: 1260–1261.

<sup>2</sup> Patrick Maynard Stuart Blackett (1897–1974), physicist see Mary Jo Nye, 'Blackett, Patrick Maynard Stuart, Baron Blackett (1897–1974)', *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), vol. 5, 946–949.

<sup>3</sup> Garrison (1913).

*Singer to Sigerist, London, 23 May 1939*

My dear Sigerist,

(1) I have had Bayon (of whom I wrote you) here to-day. I know him well – too well – by correspondence but I had not met him before. I gathered from him that he had had correspondence with you also concerning a new edition of Garrison & that you were unfavourable.<sup>1</sup> After talking with Bayon, I agree with you. He is too pedantic, too limited & too specialised. There is a childish element in him. Also although he has been more than 20 years in England he makes some queer mistakes still in the language.

(2) I gather (only from Bayon) that you are, in principle, opposed to a new edition of Garrison. I know your low opinion of the book & certainly no one can defend its arrangement or its standard of accuracy. Nevertheless it is a most useful reference book & I know of no other that contains so much information about medical history between two covers. I hope therefore that you will reconsider your attitude in this matter – though not to Bayon!

(3) There have been unexpected difficulties over getting Neuburger here. However a few days ago D'Arcy Power & I signed a joint "guarantee" for him (that is a guarantee to the British Government for his support if needed). I just don't see how I can fulfill my side of the guarantee! However I comfort myself with the reflexion that all men must die some time, even medical historians such as Neuburger & Singer.

(4) The human situation grows daily worse, so that I have, at last, reached the point when it seems to me that war is by no means the greatest evil that can come on our world.<sup>2</sup> In that reason I have ceased to fear war or even to regard it with exceptional distaste. On the whole I think I favor it as the least of several great evils.

Yours ever,  
Charles Singer

Needless to say Klebs has behaved badly as regards Neuburger. We now expect Neuburger in London daily.

I look forward to your reply concerning the English speaking Congress or Conference on the Hist. of Science, Medicine & Technology.

<sup>1</sup> Garrison (1913) was a famous textbook of the history of medicine.

<sup>2</sup> A popular opinion during the turmoil of the 1930s when it was believed that war would be a short affair that would eliminate Hitler's rule in Germany.

*Sigerist to Singer, Baltimore?, 24 May 1939*

My dear Singer:

Many thanks for your letters of May 8 and 10. The address of Starkenstein is:

Dr. Emil Starkenstein

11, Albertov 7

Pharmakologisch-Pharmakognostisches Institut der Deutschen Universität

Prague, Czechoslovakia

He has no definite position in America yet. We had invited him to give a series of lectures, but he wrote recently that he was unable to come. I do not know what is behind it but I think you can get more information from:

Professor E. Goldschmid<sup>1</sup>

Villa Richelieu

Chemin de l'Elysée

Lausanne, Switzerland

I am very much in favor of [sic] an English-speaking congress but I think it should be limited strictly to the History of Medicine. Otherwise it will antagonize the International Congress of the History of Science which will be held in 1940 in all probability in Lausanne. The Academy of the History of Science has always had a definitely anti-Fascist tendency so that we should support it and avoid any activity that would handicap its congress. Personally I would prefer a very informal meeting of medical historians in the week preceding the Lausanne Congress to a formal congress. I hope we can talk matters over some time this summer. I am sailing from New York on May 31 and will be in Switzerland until the middle of July where you can reach me at my mother's address:

182 St. Albanring

Basel, Switzerland

I very much like the idea of a revised edition of Garrison's book<sup>2</sup> and from all you say, I should think that H. P. Bayon would very well be qualified for the task. I should advise him to get in touch with Garrison's publisher:

W. B. Saunders Company

West Washington Square

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

and I would be very glad to recommend the publication most warmly.

Do you know that Krumbhaar is translating Castiglioni's History of Medicine for Alfred Knopf?<sup>3</sup>

With kind regards, I am

Yours ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

1939

P.S. Arcieri, although an American citizen, is an Italian Fascist graduated from the University of Rome. "Alcmeone" is a pure propaganda sheet that intends to prove that all great discoveries have been made by Italians.

<sup>1</sup> Edgar Goldschmid (1881–1957), German pathologist and medical historian in Switzerland; see 'Edgar Goldschmid, M.D.', *British Medical Journal*, 1957, i: 1478.

<sup>2</sup> Garrison (1913).

<sup>3</sup> Arturo Castiglioni, *Storia della medicina* (Milan, 1927).

269

*Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, 24 May 1939 (Telegram)*

REGRET OBLIGED TO CHANGE PLANS SHALL BE IN LONDON 15 PALACE  
COURT FROM MAY THIRTIETH HOPE TO WELCOME YOU THERE  
SINGER

270

*Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, 30 May 1939*

My dear Sigerist,

You had better see the enclosed documents to know what is afoot. I have taken no further action & the simplest thing is to send them to you. No need to return them.

Yours ever

Charles Singer

We expect Neuburger daily but I am very reluctant to write to him to obtain an exact date.

271

*Singer to Sigerist, London, 10 June 1939 (Telegram)*

WELCOME TO ENGLAND MEETING YOU PADDINGTON STATION EXPECT  
YOU ALL TO LUNCH  
SINGER 15 PALACE COURT W2

272

*Sigerist's secretary to Singer, Baltimore?, 14 June 1939*

Dear Dr. Singer:

I wish to acknowledge your two letters of May 23 and May 30 to Dr. Sigerist. He left for Europe on May 30 and will not return until December. I have forwarded the entire correspondence to him and wish to notify you of that fact.

Very sincerely yours,

[XY]

Secretary to Dr. Sigerist

273

*Sigerist to Singer, Kastanienbaum near Lucerne, Switzerland, 1 July 1939*

Dear Singer,

Your letter of May 23 reached me in Switzerland. I am not at all opposed to a new edition of Garrison's book. On the contrary, I am convinced that a revised edition will be very well received in America. The book has weaknesses, but it is a regular mind [sic] of information and it has become a classic in America. I should be very glad to support Bayon's plan with a publisher very strongly.<sup>1</sup>

As to the Congress, I am all in favour of it, but I think I wrote you before, that we should not antagonize the International Congress of the History of Science, that will be held in 1940 in Switzerland or Belgium. The history of science group has always taken a definitely anti-fascist attitude, so that we should support them. Hence I feel, that if we organize a special congress in England, it should be limited to the History of Medicine, so that it will compete with the Berlin Congress.<sup>2</sup>

I had a letter from Neuburger recently, but will not answer it before I hear, that he has landed safely in England. You know that my guarantee of \$100 still holds good.<sup>3</sup>

I am in Switzerland for two more weeks, and will sail for South-Africa on July 20.

With kind regards to Mrs. Singer and yourself

I am yours ever

Henry E. Sigerist

<sup>1</sup> A new edition of Garrison's book did not materialize before World War II, and the 4th edition of 1929 was reprinted in 1960.

<sup>2</sup> Plans for a congress of the history of science fell victim to World War II.

<sup>3</sup> See letter 258.

274

*Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, 17 September 1939*

My dear Sigerist,

Many thanks for the Bulletin containing your account of the 11th International Congress. I have just read it.<sup>1</sup>

I wish I had known that an invitation for the next Congress was needed. We could easily have had it again in England.

I learn from your excellent & most readable account that I have been elected an Honorary Member of the Permanent Committee. No information to that effect has reached me. Do you suppose that it will? And do you think that if or when it does that I should resign. I don't suppose it matters either way very much.

Anyhow, as the world is now going, 1940 is a very long way off. Anything might happen in that time.<sup>2</sup>

We are getting rather tired – my wife & I. I do not think that we have ever worked so hard as in these last 4 years. The only satisfaction is that we really feel we have successfully planted a few refugees. But it is such an endless task!

Yours always,  
Charles Singer

<sup>1</sup> 11th International Congress of the History of Medicine held in Yugoslavia. Henry E. Sigerist, 'Yugoslavia and the XIth International Congress of the History of Medicine', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 1939, 7: 93–147.

<sup>2</sup> World War II had broken out on 1 September.

275

*Dorothea Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, 16 November 1939*

My dear Professor Sigerist,

This is just a line to assure you that of course we will do everything possible to help Mrs. Sigerist. I have just written to her and begged her to come over and to bring your Mother as well as the children. It will be a real pleasure to us to have them here. I wish it were likely that you could all spend the winter close to us. I am sure we could find you a nice house.<sup>1</sup>

It will be very interesting to hear your reflections on your African experiences.

Many greetings from us both,  
Yours very sincerely,  
Dorothea Waley Singer

<sup>1</sup> World War II had broken out when Sigerist was in South Africa and his family in Switzerland. The family returned to the U.S. in November, Sigerist in January (see following letter).