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Summer

1874

Aet. 25.

Chapter VITHE YOUNG PROFESSOR AT MCGILL.

After his ^{long} ~~year's~~ absence ^{Osler had} ~~he~~ returned ^{to Canada} ~~home to Dundas~~ with empty pockets and ^{medically} ~~quite~~ anxious for a job. ^{His record} ~~There is a~~ tradition that for a time he ^{took over the} ~~was~~ of a local practitioner ^{Dr. A. H. Walker's practice} ~~assisted Dr. A. H. Walker, a local practitioner~~ in Dundas, and the first fee as a practising physician entered in his account-book reads: "Speck in cornea - 50¢" - an entry he was known to point out to aspiring young M.D.'s ^{in Calumet} with a twinkle in his eye. ^{also} ~~Later on he~~ served for a month as locum tenens for Dr. Charles O'Reilly, a McGill graduate who had long been Resident Physician at the City Hospital in Hamilton, O'Reilly was ~~Dr. Walker's brother-in-law~~ and tradition ^{he} ~~also~~ relates that ~~Osler~~ took the post for the consideration of \$25 and a pair of old-fashioned elastic-sided boots which had proved too small for Charlie O'Reilly.' However this may be, he was not long left in uncertainty as to his future.

To W. O. from Palmer Howard.

47 Union Avenue, Montreal.
July 6th, '74.

My dear Osler: I have just ret^d from a Meeting of the Med^l Faculty of the College at which I am happy to be able to inform you it was agreed to recommend you to the Governors of

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the College for the office of Lecturer upon Institutes in the room of Dr. Drake who resigns on account of ill health. You have not been spending your time in vain in working at practical physiology and I must heartily congratulate you upon this fine prospect that has opened before you. The fees of the students will at least meet your actual expenses for board clothes etc & the position in the college will afford the strongest proof to the public that you are at least a well qualified physician and that experience is all that you require to merit their patronage. I would advise you to come down at once, hang out your shingle, and set actively to work upon your lectures - you will find the time short enough. Drake can be of much assistance and is willing to be; and he has a fine collection of diagrams drawings etc and a great many mounted specimens which will be of use & wh. he will no doubt dispose of to you very reasonably. You will rec. an official letter from the Dean no doubt by the same mail that conveys this - answer it at once.

The time is a favourable one moreover at which to enter upon practice - for altho. you will have to wait for that like others - labour will procure its reward in that field also. Please present my congratulations to y^r father upon this gratifying recognition of y^r merits by the oldest medical school in Canada. All y^r friends here will be much pleased on your account.

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I regretted to have missed you on y^r arrival from Europe as you must have had lots of recent information to impart and as I wanted to hear of your doings - but you know what I was about and no doubt will forgive me. I hope soon to see you here and "to hear of y^r affairs". Till then I remain Very sincerely yours

R. P. Howard

Preserved with this letter is the following fragmentary draft of

Osler's reply, *which says:*

~~Dundas~~

~~July 8th [1874]~~

My dear Dr. Howard: ~~To you more than to any one else my warmest~~
~~thanks are due for the manner in which you have always sought to~~
~~further my welfare, especially in this appointment in the College.~~
... I do not accept ~~it~~ without some diffidence, still I hope to be able
to work up a decent set of Lectures I am glad it is only a Lec-
tureship. It not only sounds better, (as I am so young) but to
my English friends Sanderson, Sharpey, Klein &c it will seem more
in keeping with what they know of my attainments. It now remains
to be seen whether with teaching & [private practice] I can follow
in any original work. Of course I shall try hard. ~~I shall come~~
~~down as soon as I possibly can get away~~ I have been taking Dr
Sketch ~~Wal[ker's] Prac[tice]~~ ever since I came back and he does not return
for another week. ~~I want to spend a little time in Toronto.~~

The time in Toronto enabled him to see John Johnson and to discuss them with
his class. *Memorandum.*

On the following day he wrote ^{to} the Dean Campbell, formally accepting the position, and sent an undated scribble to his friend in Sanderson's laboratory.

To E. Sharpey Schäfer from W. O.

The Rectory, Dundas.
[July, 1874]

My dear Schäfer: - I daresay you will be glad to hear that I have got the appointment of Lecturer of Medicine at McGill College, Montreal - the post I was on the look out for, but did not expect so soon. It is worth at present about £200 per annum and may be worked up to £300. Of course I must go in for private practice as well, but that is slow in coming so that I will have all my time to prepare the Lectures. We are having a hot summer and I have wished myself back in England more than once lately. I don't like the extremes of climate here. Give my kind regards to Drs Sharpey and Sanderson and also to your people at Highgate. Believe me

Yours sincerely

WM OSLER

He must have promptly acquainted Father Johnson with his plans, for the latter writes his son:

July
1874

To James Bovell Johnson from W. A. Johnson

The Parsonage,
Weston, July 21st 1874

My dear Jimmie Yours of 18th at hand. Enclosed herewith find the \$2⁰⁰--
you mention. W. Osler was in Toronto last week & returned to Dundas Saturday
18th. You will have heard from him by this time no doubt. He is off to Mont-
real about Saturday next the 25th The Faculty of McGill &^c think he should
be there. . . .

Meanwhile during his few weeks in Dundas and Hamilton he ^{had} cemented friend-
ships, as he ~~subsequently did wherever he happened to be~~, with members of the

local profession. ^{Indeed} ~~and~~ he never failed to engratiate himself ^(wherever he might be) with the older prac-

tioners in particular, ^{towards whom he always felt especially drawn. So an} ~~an~~ enduring attachment was established at this

time with two Hamiltonians of an older generation, themselves intimate

friends: Dr. John A. Mullin and Dr. Archibald Malloch a fine Scot, one of

Lister's pupils and the leading surgeon of the region. Evidence of his

affection for and interest in the 'doctors of the old school' - men like

James Hamilton who practised sixty (7) years in West Flamboro - crops out

in many of his writings. There was, for example, a Dr. Case, who in

1809, when four years of age, had been brought from Pennsylvania to Upper

Canada by his U. S. Loyalist father. For fully forty years he had occupied a house in Hamilton on the corner of King and Walnut Streets, and long after he had given up his practice he was wont to sit in the window and nod to his numerous acquaintances, or reminisce with those who would drop in and pass the time of day with him. This Osler never failed to do when ~~passing through~~ ⁱⁿ Hamilton, and some years later in an editorial entitled "Doctors' Signs" in which he poked fun at this questionable form of advertising, he ends with this paragraph.

Happy the man whose reputation is such or whose local habitation is so well known that he needs no sign! This is sometimes the case in country places and small towns, not often in cities. We know of one such in a prosperous Canadian city. Grandfather, father and son have been in 'the old stand' so long that to the inhabitants of the locality the doctor's house is amongst the things which have always been. The patients' entrance is in a side street and a small porch protects the visitor. The steps are well worn and the native grain is everywhere visible in the wooden surroundings. There is neither bell nor knocker and the door presents interesting, and so far as we know, unique evidences that votaries to this Aesculapian shrine have not been lacking. On

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1874

the panels at different heights are three well-worn places where the knuckles of successive generations of callers have rapped and rapped and rapped. The lowest of the three, about three feet from the floor, represents the work of 'tiny Tim' and 'little Nell,' so often the messengers in poorer families. Higher up and of less extent is a second depression where 'Bub' and 'Sis' have pounded, and highest of all, in the upper panel a wider area, where the firmer fists of the fathers and brothers have as the years rolled on, worn away the wood to nearly half its thickness. Such a testimony to the esteem and faithfulness of successive generations of patients is worthy of preservation.*

*Canada Medical & Surgical Journal, Dec., 1883, xii, 313. *When the* ~~the~~ old house was finally demolished in 1894 ~~the~~ door was saved and is now in the Hamilton museum in Dundurn Park.

He must have ~~gone on to~~ ^{proceeded to} Montreal ^{about the first of} in August, ^{to} judging from ^{on} the account-book of this period. ~~It is~~ almost the last in which he took ^{the} trouble to itemize his expenditures. It begins: "Fare, Hamilton to Montreal \$12.50"; and his first entries ^{after his arrival} in ~~Montreal~~ are:

Fees for Desk and Chair on acct.	12.25
Book case, on account	12.35
Ton of coal	8.00

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Subscription to "Churchman"	3.00
Book bill Dawsons	20.00
Rent of room \$10 per month	

Apparently on Palmer Howard's insistence he thus ^{with a desk, chair, a book case on the ground} characteristically

furnished a room at 20 Radegonde Street below Beaver Hall Hill in the lower part of Montreal, and there he hung out his 'shingle' though it does not appear that any patients were ever attracted thereby, nor had they been that he would have been found at home.

Sept. 1874

His first task, for which he had little taste, was to prepare the formal lectures for the year and, as he later confessed, he groaned heavily over the task, *obligation*.

"When I returned to Montreal in September, 1874, the Professor of the Institutes of Medicine had had to retire on account of heart disease, and instead of getting, as I had hoped, a position as his demonstrator, the faculty appointed me lecturer with the ghastly task of delivering four systematic lectures a week for the winter session, from which period dates my ingrained hostility to this type of teaching." *

~~*An address on "The medical clinic, a retrospect and a forecast."~~ ^{etc} before the Abernethian Society, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London. British Medical Journal, 1914, i, 10.

One of the pupils in his first class, Dr. Beaumont Small of Ottawa, thus writes of his impressions.

^a
With such impressions I saw him first as he entered the lecture room to open his course on the Institutes of Medicine. Quick and active, yet deliberate in his walk and manner, with a serious and earnest expression, it was evident that he looked

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upon his lectures as serious and at once imparted the same feeling to others. In a very few words he welcomed his class, stated what he hoped to do and what he expected in return, concluding with a gentle warning that he expected attendance and attention from all. We succumbed to that genial and kindly manner which has been so characteristic throughout his life, and I doubt if any professor had more carefully studied lectures, or better attention than was given to him.

The lecture began with an explanation of the old Edinburgh term of Institutes of Medicine. Then in bold outline he sketched inorganic and organic matter, vegetable and organic life, vital force, and closed with a description of cellular life and an outline of future lectures. From that hour Physiology was an attractive study and the lectures like unto the Gods.

When I look back upon that period it is evident that 1876-7 was the beginning of a period of renaissance for McGill, and Osler the moving spirit, but it would not be right to impart to him all the credit. The recent but previous appointments to the Faculty of Ross, Roddick, Sheppard^{he} and Gardner, all young and energetic, of the highest type of professional standing, was not without design. These supported by the mature wisdom of Dean Campbell, R. P. Howard and Craik could mean only progress and resulted in the reputation that McGill achieved during the succeeding decade.

Oct.
1874

The period, as Dr. Small says, was truly one of ^{a new birth} ~~renaissance~~ for McGill,

and though by no means due to Osler entirely, his personality nevertheless,

there as ^{in other places} ~~elsewhere~~ during his subsequent migrations, proved to be the leaven which

raised the loaf, as shown by the flattening out which always followed his de-

parture.

'Jimmie' Johnson had entered the school, and for various reasons Osler's advances in the way of giving him financial aid and of taking him as a boarder were rejected. Father Johnson, judging from his letters to his son, undoubt-

edly felt that the unorthodox and non-sectarian environment of University Col-

lege had had a demoralizing effect upon ^{his former pupil, to whom almost} him. Almost all of his countless

letters contain some reference ^{and} to Osler, who is either in or out of his favour: ^{cf. letter Oct 5 1874}

W.A. Johnson To his son from

Octbr 19th 1874

. . . Tell Prof^r W. Osler, I have not forgotten him or his message about Lounde on the Blow Fly; but have put off writing, hoping still to see him. I will write him if all be well, in a few days. Ask him if he puts up any specimens to put up one or two for me, be they ever so indifferent. I would like to have them. When I can get to Town I will send you a little more money though it would be well to tell me in \$ & ¢ about what you require: for I am ignorant of what may be the value of anything you have to buy. . . .

Nov.
1874Nov^r 13th 1874

. . . If newspaper reports be true, I see you are having a pretty fair sprinkling of smallpox down with you. How is my well beloved W.O. getting on. I must take time to write to him. Tell him I feel I have neglected him. I have been so disappointed & each day a fresh little trouble, so that I can not find time or heart for anything. . . . The D^r (Bovell) wrote me a letter the other day. He says he has been seven weeks on his back in the bed. I will enclose it by the way you would like to see it, & so would Osler. Please return it to me I want to answer it. All are well here. . . .

Dec^r 4th 1874

. . . How about X^{mas} now very near at hand? What do you wish to do? Do you wish to stay in Montreal or stay at Weston? ~~Have not any inducements to hold out save the delight it may give me, if you happen to rest contented for a few days at Weston. I can not well imagine the merely going to Toronto to knock about in so called 'society' will do you any good whatever, but I will furnish the money for travelling if you wish to come home.~~ Does Prof^r Osler come up? Be sure you bring me some kind of specimens, for the Microscope. I have been reading "Handbook for the Physiological Laboratory" by Brunton, Foster, Klein & Sanderson. Arthur lent it to me. If you could only go quietly through that book, it ought to be \$500 a year to you, without ever leaving the house, every year of life afterwards. Would that I had time to go into it, Old as I am, I would master it in a year or so. It contains all that rudimentary knowledge & description of appliances methods &c & well defined normal tissues & from wh^h a student may go on to the end. Prof. Osler has it. If I recollect he shewed it me, when I first saw him at Dundas after his return from England.

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1874

Vache?

Try & mind your spelling as much as possible. It is infinitely better. Vaccinate comes from Vacke a cow so it cannot have an x in it but double cc. Keep up your resolve about reading for 5 minutes & when I see you, or if not I will write & tell you better reading that you can have. . . .

Dec^r 9th 74

. . . I am not surprised at your not taking up with Prof^r Osler. He is an Osler, & there is that in him unless I am much mistaken w^h you must never admire. He wanted me to let you board with him, but I never encouraged such an idea, while at the same time I thought it unwise either to refuse it or so to neglect it as to make it difficult to take advantage of it if you wished. I would like to write you a good deal on the Osler character, but am too poorly. One thing only I see worthy of your imitation, that is its Application. There does not appear to be any talent about them, ~~or any~~ ~~high principles of action~~. Simply great application and, probably? the motive is money making. It is well to be able to see & speak with persons shewing some marked characteristics. Osler is one whose characteristic is application. In him then you will see what may be done by application, but not from the same motive. . . .

✓ There evidently were moments when Father Johnson could not stomach the fact that Osler had gone to an institution where youths on their admission were not obliged to sign the Thirty-nine Articles, and which revered the

Nov.
1874

secular Jeremy Bentham to the extent of preserving in its museum his clothed skeleton - for he had left his body to be dissected at University College. But severe as this ^{last} letter sounds, it is, after all, what Osler often said of himself - that he had but a single talent - a capacity for industry. But Osler could apply himself not to work alone but to play as well, and always knew where to find children with whom he could frolic. His cousin writes: ". . . Willie dropped in four times on Saturday; he stole the new kitten and now the old kitten, and the children are wondering where she is. He has just come in to tea."

During these years
The group of younger men in the faculty became doubly intimate through *the most intimate*
the medium of a monthly dinner club famous for the pranks and practical jokes its members played on one another. In this coterie, with the possible exception of Arthur Browne, Osler's particular intimates were George Ross and Francis J. Shepherd, and such outings as he permitted himself to engage in were usually taken 'up country' in company with these two.*

*F. J. Shepherd relates that in 1874 Osler examined both himself and Ross for life insurance, he being rejected owing to a valvular lesion of the heart. Of the three he alone survives.

~~Afterward~~ ^{early Montreal} During these years in Montreal ~~Chance~~ ^{Chance} brought him into frequent contact with a group of men who were enriching Canada ~~as well as~~ ^{and incidentally} themselves by transactions concerned with the grain, up to the great west. It is then recalled in later years how at this time his brother 'E.B.' ^{then} Chairman of the Temiskaming and some other railroad used to come down to illustrate nearly everywhere and how on his return ^{from Stratford} the College or hospital he would find a note from Donald P. Smith ^{saying} "At 7.00 as your brother is down". Angus, Stephen, Mac Intyre and others would be ready to take these also: and give the meal ~~in a hotel~~ ^{in a hotel} in spite of ~~the~~ ^{W.D.'s} presence the latter would be a matter foreign to his taste and understanding - of finance and the affairs of the C.P.R. which was then thought a period of hard sledding. These gatherings usually ended in Donald Smith leaving for New York to get his credit raised by his friend Kennedy.

For more to his taste was the monthly dinner club formed by a group of intimates ~~from among~~ ^{from among} the younger members of the faculty - a club formed

Nov.-Dec.
1874To E. Sharpey Schäfer from W. O.No. 20 Radegonde St.,
Montreal.

Nov. 27, '74.

My dear Schäfer: - I have to congratulate you on your appointment. I only saw it a few weeks ago. ~~(Fragment torn out)~~ * * * a systematic course of Lectures is no easy matter to get up. Saturday afternoon I devote to demonstrations, principally Histological. You are very welcome to the surplus copies of that paper. Would it be worth while if you are going to publish all the Laboratory papers together, for me to go over those atropine experiments? Would you kindly ask Fielder whether he has forwarded the rabbit and Griffin's blow-pipe. I have heard nothing of them yet. We have winter upon us already - two feet of snow. My kind regards to Dr. Sanderson and to Mr. and Mrs. Schäfer.

Yours sincerely, W^m Osler.

He went home ^{to Dundas} for ^{the} his Christmas recess, stopping off for a visit with ~~the~~ his Toronto relatives: ^{and} While there, as was characteristic of him, he dropped in to introduce himself and to give a welcome to the newly appointed Professor of Biology in the Toronto School, who had come from Edinburgh. Ramsay Wright, for it was he, had recently arrived in Toronto and he recalls that Osler, behaving like an old acquaintance, stated

that he had borrowed his brother Edmund's carriage, was going to drive out to see his old preceptor in Weston and would he not go along.

They found Johnson wearing cassock and cross, and living alone in the old rectory, for his wife before this had left him, to go and live with one of their sons. They shared a frugal meal prepared by Johnson and laid out on a plain deal table, beside which they sat on a pine board seat. But there was talk of natural history, particularly of animal parasites and of some of the entozo^a~~en~~ they had found and observed but were unable to identify. One of these in particular, a trematode worm found in the gills of a nute, Professor Wright subsequently became sufficiently interested in to describe in full in his first paper published in Toronto. In view of the source of his primary introduction to Canadian helminthology at the time of this Christmas visit to Weston he named this particular species Sphyranura Osleri.*

[the auroto]

*"SPHYRANURA OSLERI, nov. gen. et spec. "I have lately received from my friend Professor Osler, of Montreal, several specimens of a worm taken from the gills and cavity of the mouth of our common Lake-Lizard (Necturus lateralis, Raf.) These had been preserved for eight years in Goadby's fluid, and proved to be comparatively useless for further examination, having become quite opaque and black in colour. From

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some specimens, in a good state of preservation, mounted by Dr. Osler for microscopical examination, and also from his notes and sketches made on observation of the fresh specimens, I am able to communicate the following. The only specimen of Necturus which I have had the opportunity of examining since receiving these did not yield any of the worms. . . ."

(Wright, R. Ramsay: Contributions to American Helminthology. Proceedings of the Canadian Institute. New series, vol. i, No. 1, 1879).

To F. J. Shepherd from W. O.

On to Quebec 31. Montreal
January 1st 1875

My dear Shepherd I was so glad to get your note from Marbourg. You did nicely to go to a small University town where English Students are scarce. One sees more of German life in that way & picks up the language in half the time. When do you go on to Wien? I shall call on your people this afternoon and find out where I am to address this letter. I am glad you saw Philpot in London; he is a first rate fellow & his introductions will be useful. The "Reidhof" Restaurant you will no doubt patronize in Vienna. It is about the best and you are sure of meeting other English fellows there. When do you return? & are you going to settle in Montreal? There is a talk of the Dean resigning in the spring and of course there will be a vacancy in consequence. Or in any case there must be a ^{Can} vacancy before long and the Demonstratorship will be open. The question is: why should not you get it? Cameron of course will be in the field; but I am sure if a vacancy occurs in the spring & Chipman goes out of the Hospital, leaving Cameron full Surgeon, there will be opposition to his holding both appointments; and you would have backers for the Demonstratorship

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1875

among the Faculty. Remember this comes solely from me. I have heard no other opinions on the subject. I think, however you would be wise in paying some attention to practical anatomy in Vienna and attend the lectures of Hyrtl's successor - whoever he is. The courses on operative surgery by Billroth's assistant are also splendid. I am working away at my lectures & so far have got on fairly well. Do you return by way of Paris? if so I would like you to execute a little commission for me there; and I may also trouble you to bring a few little things from Germany I will send a list & place the dimes to your credit at - where? Bk. of Montreal here or London? Yours very sincerely

W^m Osler

Preparing for these formal old-time lectures such as were expected of a teacher in the 70's must have been a torment to him. The portfolio, 'tanned with exposure and chapped with rough handling' in which he carried them, holds today a few yellow much-foxed sheets with the students' names and this note written in a later hand.

This is my lecture portfolio with the list of students in the last class (1863-4) to which I lectured at McGill. The rule was to call the roll once a week, but as the list shows this was not always carried out.

For the first few years I wrote out and read my lectures. I am sorry no copy has been kept for I destroyed them all on leaving Montreal. Then I got into the habit of lecturing from slips, two of which are here preserved [Fig.], one on the skin and the other on glycogen. W. Osler.

Mar
1875To W. C. From W. A. Johnson.The Parsonage, Weston,
March 4th, 1875.

My dear Osler: - I suppose you are getting to the close of a first term now & are getting a little breathing time. I never seem to forget you. Like a boy who has learnt a lesson well, there is some spot where it stays, despite of all else he does & learns; & when least thinking it comes before him again & again. How much more may this be the case, when we have formed affections, & encouraged hopes for the future, - hopes not for a period, or even for life alone, but forever. There are few, very few conditions in this world, in w^h men may not, & do not jostle one another, cross one another's path, get into one another's way, so to speak. Friendships may be formed, but circumstances interfere with them. The nearer our calling or occupation or profession is alike, the more likely to cross one another. I always had, & have still the highest esteem for our mutual friend Dr. Bovell as a Dr. but I do not know how to address him as a Priest. With his medical opinions I could not differ; only do as he told me to: it is not so with religious opinions, there might be different opinions leading to different ends or doctrines, & demanding diverging or crossing courses of action. It is pleasant to have a friend in whose case these things can not occur. It is pleasant to feel that what your friend is doing, is right (for you can not even surmise it is wrong) & ask a blessing on it. This is the kind of spot left in my memory of yourself. ~~I see & hear nothing to change it; the~~

Mar.
1875

spot ever & again reveals you as one in whose welfare I am intimately concerned; & in whose path through life there is nothing that can cross my own, or excite a wish but for its present & future peace & happiness. If you ever moralize a little, & of course you do; how strangely few friends we have (visible ones, I mean) of whom we can say this! How early we learn to use our neighbour as a stepping-stone for something we want; & measuring others by our bushel, think they are doing the same with us. I really intended, & earnestly hoped to be able to spend a week in Montreal last autumn. It would have been very pleasant for me. If it please God to remove me from here, I hope he will open my way to spend a few days with you yet, & see Mr Wood & others in Montreal. I am still as much interested as ever in the "book of Nature;" though with less time to observe it, & fewer opportunities. This seems only to make me more eager; but alas! this curiosity about many things, in w^h the sight is the chief sense occupied, does not minister much, I think, to devout meditation. Perhaps it is intended to be only as a "pool in the wilderness;" a resting place for an hour; a wholesome recreation. Be it so, it is refreshing, & delightfully new at every turn. Are you working especially at any one point this winter? I look for a specimen or two; anything: it will be interesting, & always serve as a remembrancer. How is Jimmie doing? By his letters I have been hoping he has worked; with what success, his examinations must show. His brother Arthur wants him to pass at Trinity School of Medicine this spring. I must own I do not see the point very clearly, but it

He has
by twice

may be fairly argued I can not, because I do not understand anything about it. What do you think of it? If you see any benefit please let him (Jimmie) know it, & me too. I tell him I will furnish the money, if he finds it necessary. The word money reminds me that Jimmie has

twice or thrice mentioned, when sending an a/c of fees paid or unpaid, that you had given him his ticket; & intimated or said, it was not necessary to pay for it. I know your kindness would suggest this, but you are not indebted to me in any way to warrant such a deprivation. Of course anything you can throw in his way, or anything you can employ him in, will be a great & additional kindness to me, & I shall be ever thankful for it; & doubtless he will too, for he is not generally insensible to such acts of kindness; but I have no reason to look for a remission of fees. I suggested to Jimmie, it was a mistake, but he is imperative in thinking he must not offer to pay. If the boy is mistaken, let me enclose it to you, that would satisfy us, & leave him in ignorance; if not, I can but thank you, & add it to many kind remembrances I enjoy, both of yourself in particular, & of your very kind friends.

¶ I suppose you must have noticed that, to all appearance, I did not do the kind thing to your dear Father & others on the Comⁿ wⁿ the Bp. appointed to find charges against me. Whether you thought so or not, there was good reason from all the public has seen, to think so. I was very peculiarly placed, & saw no way but irony to meet it. I am waiting the Bp's decision before writing a last letter, apologizing for seeming rude, & shewing why that was the only course open to me. Two most important principles were assailed. I told the Bp. I dare not be a party to the proceedings. He tried to force me. I could not submit. I must meet the Comⁿ or my case would go by default: I could not appear, or the principle was compromised: I could not touch the subject by way of evidence, or reason upon it, because it had not been heard: & having assured the Bp he had no authority whatever to create the commission, irony was the only way to shew I meant all I said, & defy further proceedings. I know irony & sarcasm drive away one's friends, therefore you had better never attempt to use them: but they have their time & place, & looking at it now with calm & unbiassed view, I still think I did well, & if the same causes arose would treat them as I did then. The private correspondence between the Bp. & myself is the only means of understanding the matter, but this shall never be made public with my consent alone. The poor Bp. whose kindness to me is unwearied & real, expressive of high praise also, is really in a "tight" place. I have promised to obey his orders immediately & without a murmur, but neither to gainsay or accept his opinions. I have removed every obstacle to his decision that I know of, & I hope daily to receive it.

Is there any chance of your coming up this way after Easter? I suppose the small-pox hospital keeps you more or less busy; but the number of patients decreases a good deal towards spring & summer, so you might get away for a trip to see, & gladden old faces again. Everything much as usual here. I have not paid the Humber Ponds a single visit this winter, & now we are snowed in in every direction. With my best wishes for your success, health & happiness, & hoping to have a line, when you have time & inclination

believe me, as ever,

Your sincere & affect^t friend,

W. A. Johnson

(Small-pox hospital. W.O.
remitting the fees of "Jimmie": H.C.)

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Poor Johnson! It was a needless warning to his favorite people that he should be a stranger to irony and sarcasm. It was a dictum of Southey's.

It was Southey's doctrine that 'a man's character can more surely be judged by those letters which his friends addressed to him than by those he himself penned, for they are apt to reveal with unconscious faithfulness the regard held for him by those who knew him best.' And there might be added to this statement - particularly if they were letters which the recipient saw fit to preserve. There need be no other excuse for the inclusion in this story of these several epistles from Father Johnson, much as one might prefer to see those passing in the other direction. They were among the few ^{old} letters ^{found among Orlens papers} which Sir William had kept, for it was not his habit to preserve correspondence.

Poor Johnson! It was a needless warning to his favorite people that he should be a stranger to irony & sarcasm.

After his wife had left him ^{his} it is said that Johnson never again locked ^{announced by his wife} the door of the rectory; ^{but} and though a lonesome old man he did not live in the past alone, as this note by Miss Kathleen Lizars of Toronto indicates.

When I was eleven and twelve years old I spent many week-ends with the Rev. Mr. Johnson. The picture of him is in my mind quite clearly, even across this space of time. Tall, spare, his hair brushed straight back in the style now affected by young men, austere and lovable in com-

ination, always in his cassock and the cross hanging unostentiously, always with his house half full of people and most of them young. He often talked of his boys, but I did not take it in then what he meant. The school had gone long before I knew him. His ritualistic practices, (very ordinary for nowadays) earned the enmity of the villagers - we were always awestruck at the signs of broken windows and marks of stones or hatchets in the altar.

On March 31st Osler gave the Valedictory Address* to the

~~*Canada Medical & Surgical Journal, 1875, III, 433.~~

graduating class at the annual convocation. It was his first effort in this direction and though he probably agonized over it as most young men would under the circumstances, it shows little of the literary quality which gave the charm to his later addresses. They were often better in the material than in the manner of delivery for he never possessed those oratorical gifts not uncommon among medical teachers which make possible the impressive presentation of material which proves to be shadowy in substance on later perusal.

One finds in this brief address, nevertheless, many hints

The professional points of view he came to acquire. It is therefore
of what is already in his mind, and it is an epitome of things

he continued to dwell upon more and more emphatically as the

years progressed. After pointing out that their training was

incomplete, that they must be students always since medicine,

unlike law and theology, is a progressive science, he urges

them to keep up with their reading, to cultivate books, to get

in the habit of attending societies and reporting experiences,

thus cooperating with the journals. He points out that be-

haviour is more certain to bring success than "a string of di-

plomas;" touches on their obligations to the poor, on the

question of livelihood, on the relationship between doctors,

and ends with an appeal for sobriety, more needed, happily, by

students of those days than of the present. Still a total

abstainer himself, some of his more intimate young friends,

men of the greatest promise in the profession, were already

going to the ground despite his personal efforts to help them,
of which there are many stories.

*** You have of course entered the Profession of Medicine with a view of obtaining a livelihood; but in dealing with your patients let this always be a secondary consideration. It has been well said, "No one should approach the temple of science with the soul of a money-changer." Let the spirit of our Medical moralist, Sir Thomas Browne, whose Religio Medici I would commend to your perusal, adumbrate you. He says "Let me be sick myself, if sometimes the malady of my patient be not a disease unto me; I desire rather to cure his infirmities than my own necessities; where I do him no good methinks it is scarce honest gain, though, I confess, 'tis but the worthy salary of our well intended endeavours." ¶ Upon your relations to fellow-practitioners, allow me to offer you a few words of counsel. It is a fact well known to you all that the great approbrium of our Profession, especially in the small towns, is the constant rivalry and distrust of one another displayed by its members. That men whose high calling ought to bind them closely together, and whose interests are so much in common, should thus disagree, is a matter deeply to be regretted; and, I would urge upon you, during your, let me hope, prosperous career, to do all that may lie in your power to remove this scandal from our midst. A little watchfulness when commencing practice may prevent it entirely in your own circle, and you may thus have your brother prac-

titioners as friends not enemies. The evil, I regret to say, is generally traceable to the patients. You will not be engaged in practice many weeks before one ~~weeks~~ you who has been under the care of some other medical man. * * * Make it a rule always to discourage the tales of a patient about another medical man; and even when you think he has made a mistake, be slow to judge. Often ~~tee you may feel aggrieved, and think yourself wronged or slighted; instead of giving vent to your feelings on such occasions, restrain~~
 * * * ~~them, and remember the injunction "If thy brother trespass against thee; go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother."~~

A word now on the Temperance question, which is becoming an all-important one in Canada for us as medical men. That alcohol is a medicine, and a valuable one, nobody not blinded by prejudice denies; but bear in mind that it is a dangerous remedy and one that should not be, as it is, so generally recommended by practitioners. * * * Medical men, more than any other, have opportunities of observing the commencement of such habits, and care should be exercised, lest this tendency be fostered by the form of treatment employed. No class of individuals can better wage war against the indiscriminate drinking habits of the public than the Doctors, and the laity will hearken to their admonitions on this point; even when the exhortations of the Divines are treated with contempt. Example, Gentlemen, is better than precept, and by becoming teetotallers yourselves, you will neither injure your health nor damage

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your professional prospects. Too many valuable lives in our Profession are sacrificed yearly to intemperance; and now is the time for you, with minds still "wax to receive and marble to retain", to lay the foundation of good sober habits.*

*Canada Medical & Surgical Journal, 1875, iii, 433.

At the end of the semester Osler was officially appointed to Dr. Drake's chair as Professor.* He had distinctly made good during his

*Dr. Maude Abbott relates that in 1908 when Sir William paid one of his periodical visits to the Pathological Museum at McGill she showed him a heart among the specimens in the collection, in a jar which had lost its label, and asked if he could identify it. He made the enigmatical remark: "If that heart had not petered out when it did, in all probability I would not be where I am now." It was Drake's.

year as lecturer. His industry, to which as already told he often referred as his single talent, was prodigious. He was not content merely with the

mapping out of his new course and preparing the necessary lectures, a task arduous enough in itself. Having no hospital position and being eager for opportunities in the pathological laboratory, he volunteered for this work, and though it was the custom at the time for the visiting physicians and surgeons at the Montreal General to perform their own autopsies, they came more and more to lean upon Osler for this purpose, and it was inevitable that in time the position of pathologist should be created for him. He alone ^{among his colleagues} was familiar with the modern technical methods of pathological histology ^{of the day,} and a succession of papers during the succeeding years were published under the names of others, in which the autopsy note was made ^{in the description of the} by him or the surgical specimen ^{was supplied by Dr. Osler} described.

Nor did he fail even in these early days to prod others.

Someone once said in after years that it ^{was} always a joy to have ^{receive}

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Used later? etc.
even a postcard from Osler, but the drawback was that it usually meant a lot of work. The following hint to Shepherd to send an open letter to Fenwick, who was editor of the local journal, has therefore a familiar ring.

To Dr. F. J. Shepherd from W. O.

April 6th 1875.

My dear Shepherd I am delighted to be able to inform you that at a meeting of the Faculty last evening you were appointed Demonstrator of Anatomy, & allow me to offer you my sincere congratulations on the occasion. An official letter from Craik will either accompany or follow this, and containing also a recommendation to take advantage of the remaining time at your disposal to work up as far as possible the subject in its practical bearing, injecting &c I should think any of the Demonstrators at Wien would be only too glad for a "consideration" to put you up to all the latest methods and old Hyrtl's museum would be worth going over carefully. Could you not send Fenwick a paper - or letter - on "Anatomy at Vienna." It would take well if you did. You are lucky in having had warning & time to prepare, & not taken short as I was. ~~They seemed to think if you get out by the middle of August it would be time enough, so that you could have the summer session at some School~~ I called at your house this morning to tell the news, but only found your sisters at home, & they as you may suppose were very glad to hear it. It seems to give very general satisfaction to all and no doubt it will be to you for of course it is only a stepping stone to other appointments. I am going to pickle some brains for my own use

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this Summer & will try to get some for you also.

It would come useful if you had a course on the Microscope as well & if you return to London by the end of June, Klein of the Brown Institution is the man to go to, but I dare say one of Brückes assistants in Vienna has good courses always in progress Have you seen Hyrtl's "Handbuch der praktischen Zergliederungs Kunst"? Dr Campbell has resigned the chair of Surgery but remains as Dean of the Faculty Fenwick succeeds him and Roddick gets ^{Clinical} ~~Chemical~~ Surgery. The Dean still retains active connection with the School and will preside at meetings &c. He goes home to Europe for next winter. Browne has taken Ross's house (Craiks old one) & should do well at the corner. I do not know where to go; rooms are so difficult to get. . .

~~Hoping to hear from you soon believe me~~ Yours sincerely

Wm Osler

Though Joseph Hyrtl was, and will always remain, one of the brilliant figures of medical history, and though his 'manual of dissecting^{on}' was a classic ^{to put} ~~which Garrison puts~~ in a class with Virchow's 'post-mortem manual', it is nevertheless interesting at this early day to find Osler referring others to important books, even to those which did not happen to be in his special field. He not only read widely and voraciously but had already started at this time a Journal Club ^{for the} to purchase and distribute ^{in 7 periods} journals which he could

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to subscribe as an individual. Into this club were drawn
 ill afford himself. ~~The club consisted of~~ Buller, Shepherd, Fenwick,
 Drake, Howard, Ross, Cline, MacDonnell and Godfrey, each of whom "chipped
 in" ten dollars for the purchase particularly of ^{the} French and German ^{journal,} ~~perio-~~
~~dicals~~. The first instalment was ordered April 13, 1875, and Osler kept
 a list of their reception and distribution. Most of the excellent ab-
 stracts, contributed to the local medical journal of which Fenwick and
 Ross were editors, were doubtless supplied by the members of this club,
 the pen of the Secretary and Treasurer being probably the busiest.

These were happy ^{though} but penurious days:
 Osler often referred to these days of poverty, for to teach physiol-
 ogy and histology, ^{by} ~~which~~ ^{by} subjects comprised the 'Institutes of Medicine',
 as he thought they should be taught, meant drawing heavily on his small
 income. *"The students" ^{Subsequently,} as he wrote years later*

"Students" ~~he~~ admitted long after, "paid fees directly to the in-
 structors, who provided equipment and material and lived on the balance.
 I did more of the former and less of the latter. The supply of micro-
 scopes was meagre, and after remedying this defect there was little
 left in my pockets." *Indeed*

He had often to go to Palmer Howard to borrow cash to meet his day's

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~~he confessed in letters as he gradually expressed it in letters:~~
 expenses, and once said years later to his young friend Malloch: "I suffered at that time from an acute attack of chronic impecuniosity."

To F. J. Shepherd from W. O.

No. 20 Radegonde St.
 May 28th [1875]

My dear Shepherd Your letter came to hand yesterday. I can very well understand your hesitation in accepting the Demonstratorship for I have felt the same thing myself. You will get over that, and should too, for remember what advantages you have had and are having. You will come to your work better prepared than any Demonstrator McGill has had for many a year. When had Roddick dissected last on his accepting it? probably in his third year. I wish I was with you in Wien just now. Everybody says it is so enjoyable there in the spring months. I suppose you will bring a Hartnack microscope out with you when you come: it will be useful. Do you return by way of Paris? if so I wish you would call at his place No. 1 Rue Bonaparte and see in what condition the Microscopes I have ordered are in. I ordered 12 & want them out before the session begins so that you may perhaps hurry him up a little. I want you to get me the Photos of the following men - that place in the Graben is the best. Hyrtl, Hebra, Bamberger, Skoda Oppolzer -(dead but Photo extant) Jäger, Billroth, Stricker, Rokitansky -(who is his successor, by the way? Is it Recklinghausen, if so one of his also) - one in any case, no matter who - Carl Braun, Brücke (2). Also a set of those cheap photos of the City (Cartes). Could you also get a Strickers simple warm stage. They are made by Kuntz, I believe, but Schenck could

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tell you about them. They are about 6-8 guelden. I want badly some back numbers of the Arch. f. Dermatol. u. Arch. für Heilk. but it will pay me better to go to Boston and consult them than buy the whole set. I have a number of cases of purpura in small-pox & am preparing a paper on the subject. Take a note of anything you may hear or see upon the subject. I may want a ^{treatise} ~~work~~ or two, but if so will write you by next mail. I shall deposit some cash to your credit at your brothers office. We are getting a little nice weather at last, but things ^{are yet} are very backward, as yet. Browne is doing very well in his large house. Practice is dull with me - never has been brisk. O. C. E. is ⁱⁿ much the same state, but unfortunately has not a College and Hospital to butter his bread. ~~I am sure~~ your people have been very kind indeed to me. I was at Como on the 24th with your brother & spent a very pleasant day. Let me know when you are to be in London. Yours very sincerely

W^m Osler

The twelve microscopes which he had ordered for his class were made possible, as will be seen, by a small salary which he was given for undertaking a disagreeable and, it may be added, a dangerous task. It was, however, an entering wedge to get clinical opportunities, which he promptly drove home. For it is evident from the letter of March 4th from Johnson as well as (that) from this one to Shepherd, that he was already at work in

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the smallpox wards and it is characteristic of him that he immediately began to make profit out of the clinical and pathological material the position offered for purposes of publication.

The 'Montreal General' at this time was a modest institution of only about 150 beds, ill-lighted and ill-ventilated. The mob-capped nurses were then of the SarahGamp type, who, as Dr. Shepherd recalls*, were not strangers

*"Reminiscences of Student Days." Montreal, 1919.

to the cup that cheers, ^{and} though it was long before modern wards and the modern type of nurse came to supplant the old order. Attached to the hospital, with quarters worst of all, was an isolated smallpox ward, in which it was the custom, apparently, for members of the attending staff to serve successively for periods of three months. In this year of 1875 smallpox was rife ~~and~~ of a particularly malignant form, and early in the year Osler's offer to take the service had been accepted, though at the time he was merely a volunteer worker in the dead-house and not a member of the hospital staff.

At this period, ~~Smallpox~~, as may be recalled, was, more or less epidemic everywhere, and was particularly severe in most seaport towns. Vaccination was not compulsory, re-vaccination was rare, and quarantine most infrequent. These ~~forbore~~ ^{Montreal} local medical journals had had a succession of editorials

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in the Montreal Journal
and protests over the existing conditions; and the 'M.G.H.'

had long made efforts to have revoked the existing law which

obligated all hospitals receiving grants from the legislature

to ^{accept} receive smallpox patients. ⁽¹⁾ *That only took the contagion on several occasions had*

⁽²⁾ *cf. The Canada Medical & Surgical Journal for 1873-74*

The Montreal General Hospital some years since, put up on their grounds a fever hospital which is a separate building, it was deemed at the time perfectly safe to the other inmates to permit Small Pox patients to be placed in this isolated building. Soon, however, the contagion was found to spread, and cases originating in the wards among the other patients became too common, life was sacrificed, and the committee of management at length determined to exclude the infected. . . . *

*"A smallpox hospital." Canada Medical & Surgical Journal, 1873-4, ii, 282.

We have on a former occasion called attention to the danger which arises to the inmates of General Hospitals by having an attached building for the treatment of smallpox. With regard to our own hospital we have reported on several occasions the spread of smallpox into the general wards and we have repeatedly advised the governing body of our hospital to close their smallpox wards

spread from the isolation ward. Another fault of the hospital was the proximity of the house of people who had been admitted for minor complaints and finally Peter Rabreau, then President of the hospital board submitted a long letter made in appeal through the lay press, insisting on this to insist that he would be provided with that quoted from the Report

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and refuse to admit patients suffering from that disease. Whenever we have suggested this desirable change, we have been met by the statement that it is contrary to the Act or Statute regulating General Hospitals, and therefore until an amendment to that Statute is effected the smallpox wards of the Montreal General Hospital must remain where they are. No person can speak more positively on this subject than the writer. He is one of the attending medical staff of the Montreal General Hospital and since the year 1867 has performed his duty during the first winter quarter, that is, during the months of November, December and January up to the year 1870 when a change took place and his months of attendance have been since that period October, November and December in each year. During his attendance he can call to mind the occurrence of smallpox in patients under his charge suffering from some minor complaints and in many instances the sufferers have paid the forfeit of their lives.*

*"The Montreal General Hospital and its Smallpox Wards."
Canada Medical & Surgical Journal, 1874, iii, 231.

Another long editorial appeared at about this time, ^{supplementing a} ~~concerning a~~

^{for the lay press}
letter written ~~to the Montreal Gazette~~ by Peter Redpath, then President of the M.G.H. Board. He had insisted on an increased accommo-

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~~Re-~~
dation by the city for smallpox patients if the disease was to be
effectually stamped out, and quotes the Boston City Hospital
report^{to the effect} that not a single case of smallpox had appeared in
Boston during the preceding twelve months owing to their
proper city care, whereas in the poorly segregated wards at
the Montreal General Hospital there were always more than 100
cases at a time.

It is quite possible that one influence which led Osler
to volunteer for the position was his interest in skin dis-
eases, which, during his sojourn in London had been aroused by
Tilbury Fox, for otherwise it certainly was not a service which
one could have courted. However, it was his first chance to
have hospital patients under his control and one may imagine
with what enthusiasm he went to work. His first publication from
these wards was the report in July 1875 of a case of scarletina

July
1875
Aet. 26.

which had appeared in a woman convalescing from smallpox, and at the end of the report he admits with frankness that he might possibly have conveyed the contagion himself.

An interesting question arises: where are we to look for the source of infection? The smallpox department is separated by a considerable interval from the general wards as well as from the houses about, in both of which places scarlatina is rife. If we are to suppose the scarlatina poison to withstand solution to such a degree that it remains active after passing through the wide space which separates the smallpox hospital from the neighbouring buildings, can we attribute a minor degree of vitality to the smallpox germs which must be wafted out of the ventilating shafts in countless numbers to be distributed in the neighbourhood? Experience has taught us that we cannot.

Another, and perhaps more likely, source of infection must not be overlooked. On the 11th and 12th ult., I attended for a confrère a case of scarlet fever in the immediate vicinity of the hospital, and on the evening of the 12th I went direct from the house to the hospital. At this period she was almost convalescent. The stage of incubation is so variously placed by different authors, ranging from three days to a month or more, that this may have been a prolongation of the period of latency. With an impoverished condition of

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blood the scarlet fever poison may not have met with sufficient quantity of that 'mysterious something,' different for each exanthem, upon which the germs are supposed to live, grow, and at last, happily, exhaust; and hence a lengthened period of incubation, with retardation of the eruption.*

*"Case of scarlatina miliaris." Canada Medical & Surgical Journal, July 1, 1875, iv, 48.

If he had wished for an active service, as he probably did,
(though not so sure on that 3 1885-86,
he could not have struck a better time, for the epidemic ^{was at}
its height during this summer. In August ~~there is~~ another edi-
^{appeared} torial in the local journal which states: "The smallpox wards of
the Montreal General Hospital must be removed or else the hospital
will be ruined as a general hospital." And in September of this
year there was an antivaccination riot during which the house of
one of the medical health officers was gutted. Meanwhile, Celer,
undistracted by all of this agitation, ^{was} was utilizing his oppor-
tunities to the full, for the service put post-mortem material

under his control, and from this source was drawn several of the reports, like that "On the Pathology of Miner's Lung," presented during the subsequent months before the Medico-Chirurgical Society. This particular report* was an admirable article dealing

*Canada Medical & Surgical Journal, 1876, iv, 144.

with the experimental pathology of anthracosis in which he became greatly interested and for which he made the drawings accompanying the text. ¶ Other papers, of less moment, followed during the course of the year - on the pathology of smallpox; on the development of vaccine pustules - but more important were his two articles on the initial rashes, and on the haemorrhagic form of smallpox, the most virulent type of the disease known since the beginning of the century. In this latter article he says:

The epidemic which has raged in this city for the past five years has been remarkable for the prevalence of this variety of the disease; and the present paper is based on 27 cases, 14 of which came under my own observation, chiefly at the General Hospi-

tal, while the remaining 13 were under the care of my predecessor, Dr. Simpson, to whose kindness I am indebted for permission to utilize them. ***

(In the smallpox department of the Montreal General Hospital there were admitted from Dec. 14, 1873, to July 21, 1875, one year and seven months, 260 cases. Of these 24 died of the variety under discussion, or 9.23 per cent.*

*Haemorrhagic Smallpox. Canada Medical & Surgical Journal, Jan. 1877, v, 288; 301.

As an example not only of ^{his} Osler's kindness of heart but also of how strangely people's paths may cross in this world, a story of this period may be told. He had joined, this Fall of 1875, his first club, the Metropolitan, where he was accustomed to dine, and as he was often alone he occasionally sat with an attractive young Englishman who ^{(chanced to be in Montreal on business and} had been put up at the club. One evening, observing that he appeared ill Osler questioned him, and suspicious of the symptoms ^{got} accompanied him to his rooms and to bed where it was soon evident that he had malignant smallpox. The

disease proved fatal after an illness of three days, and having learned the young man's name and the address of his father in England, he wrote:

To Mr. N-- from W. O.

20 Radegoude St.
Montreal.

My dear Sir -

No doubt before this, the sorrowful intelligence of your son's death has reached you, and now, when the first shock has perhaps to a slight extent passed away, some further particulars of his last illness may be satisfactory. ~~I was called in~~ professionally on the evening of Thursday 22nd, & on the following day, ^I discovered unmistakable evidence of the nature of his disease. On Saturday in consultation with Dr. Howard - the leading practitioner of our city, his removal to the smallpox Hospital was decided upon. I secured a private ward & took him there in the evening.

Even at this date was seen the serious nature of the case, & I sent for Mr. Wood at his request. At 10 p.m. I found him with your son, & we left him tolerably comfortable for the night. He was easier on Sunday morning, but well aware of his dangerous state. He spoke to me of his home, & his mother, and asked me to read the 43rd chapter of Isaiah, which she had marked in his Bible. I spent the greater part of the morning talking & reading with him. Mr Wood called in 3 or 4 times during the day, & at 9.30 P.M. I found him there again. Mr Norman had also been in just previously.

He was still sensible & requested to see Dr Howard again, in consultation with Dr. Simpson, the attending Physician to the smallpox Hospital. After 11 o'clock he began to sink rapidly, & asked me not to leave him. He did not speak much, but turned round at intervals to see if I were still by him. About 12 o'clock I heard him muttering some prayers, but could not catch distinctly what they were - "God the Father, Son & Spirit." Shortly after this he turned round and held out his hand, which I took & he said quite plainly, "Oh thanks." These were the last words the poor fellow spoke. From 12.30 he was unconscious, and at 1.25 a.m. passed away, without a groan or struggle. As the son of a clergyman & knowing well what it is to be a "stranger in a strange land" I performed the last office of Christian friendship I could, & read the Commendatory Prayer at his departure.

Such my dear sir, as briefly as I can give them are the facts relating to your son's death.

Almon

Thirty years to the day after this letter was written the newly appointed Regius Professor of Medicine in Oxford chanced to meet at dinner a Lady S--- who, attracted by his name, said that she once had a young brother who had gone out to Montreal and been cared for during a fatal illness by a doctor named Osler who had sent a sympathetic letter that had been the greatest possible solace ^{to her parents: that} ~~and~~ her

mother who was still living in the ^{South}~~semit~~ of England had always hoped she might see and talk with the man who had written it.

Later, on his way to Cornwall, Osler paid a visit on this bereaved mother, taking with him a photograph of her boy's grave which he had sent to Montreal to obtain.

School had opened the first of October, with many changes in the faculty, and the "Introductory Remarks" of the newly appointed Professor of the Institutes of Medicine were duly published.* He

*Canada Medical & Surgical Journal, Oct. 1875, iv, 202.

said in part:

... In this spirit [of reforms in medical teaching] the course you are about to begin has been inaugurated. An opportunity will henceforth be afforded to the students attending this School of becoming practically acquainted with the use of the microscope in physiology and pathology; and I may venture to congratulate McGill College as the first in this country to offer such a course, and in so doing to be the first to conform in all respects to the requirements of the College of Surgeons of England which demand that such shall be provided. x x x

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The first essential in a course like this is a proper supply of good microscopes, every student must be furnished with one to enable him to follow out the demonstrations with any degree of satisfaction. These have been obtained from Dr. Hartnack of Paris and Potsdam, and are the same as are in use in the chief laboratories of Europe. No microscope-maker, British or foreign, has yet (as far as my experience goes) made up an instrument at all to be compared with compact, Hartnack's Students' microscopes. . . .

~~Concluded~~
He ~~ends~~ with the hope that the course, thus newly inaugurated, contained merely a promise of still better things - a properly equipped physiological laboratory to be under the superintendence of a well trained assistant. *important however, which relate to the microscopic apparatus for the course, he fails to mention. One thing he fails to mention, namely, where from what source the instruments were secured. One thing he fails to mention, namely, where from what source the instruments were secured. One thing he fails to mention, namely, where from what source the instruments were secured.* Dr. Hartnack of Paris and Potsdam were some day to receive for the instruments ordered the preceding April.

Apparently in this same month Osler changed his rooms from Radegonde Street opposite the old Haymarket and moved up to 26 Beaver Hall Hill

where he took quarters from a man *who from his looks was* known on the streets as 'Don Quixote'

~~from his looks~~, but with whom he had some common interests and of whom he has left this story.

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On leaving Berlin, Dec. 1873, while ordering Virchow's Archiv at Reimers I saw on the desk the prospectus of Schmidt's Shakespeare's Lexicon, which I asked to be sent to me as soon as published. In October, 1875, I moved from Victoria Square up Beaver Hall Hill to rooms with Mr. King, an Englishman, employed in the Custom House, who had but one thought in life - Shakespeare. He had an excellent library in which I very often spent a pleasant hour. He was a dear old man, much esteemed, and always ready to spend more than he could afford on his hobby. One afternoon at the College, just before my lecture, the postman left on the table a parcel from Reimers and to my delight it was Schmidt's Concordance, which had really been forgotten. My first thought was "how happy Mr. King will be to see it." I looked at it hurriedly, but with much anticipatory pleasure. On my return to the house, Mr. King who had just come in, was sitting by the fire and greeted me in his cheery way with "What's that you've got?"

"Something that will rejoice your heart," I said, and deposited the work in his lap. The shock of the realization of a life-long dream - a complete concordance of Shakespeare, seemed to daze the old man. He had no further interest in me and not a word did he say. I never again saw my Schmidt's Concordance! For months he avoided me, but helping him one day on the stairs, my manner showed that Schmidt was forgotten, and he never referred to it again. The work went to McGill College with his Shakespeare collection. When in the Library in 1912 I asked for the first edition of Schmidt, and was glad to see my book again after nearly forty years. This story is written on the fly leaf as a warning to bibliomaniacs.*

Introduction to the
"Bibliotheca Osleriana."

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1875

In October Father Johnson paid Osler a long-deferred visit which must have served to clear up some of his misgivings regarding his favourite pupil's supposed unorthodoxy. However, after a bread-and-butter letter to his favourite pupil, (a subsequent ^{letter} ~~one~~ to his son shows that Principal Dawson ^{was in life, not present of future, but} at least ~~had~~ been too much for him. He evidently stayed with the Francis cousins, then at 47 Durocher Street, where Osler and his friends were constant visitors; and he ^{appears to have} ~~remained~~ carried him with him one of the friends ^{Harold's cousins.}

From Father Johnson to W. O.

"The Parsonage"

Weston 19 Oct. 1875.

My dear Osler, I enclose my cheque. My bad business habits made me delay longer than I ought. I find the instrument all I could wish. Have not adjusted the polarizing prism yet, but when Potter receives his consignment in all probability he will have one to imitate, & then I will send mine. My thoughts often return to you & your surroundings. I am very glad I went to Montreal. I enjoy a capability of thinking of you all & understanding what you are doing, whⁿ I could not before. Moreover I added greatly to my friends. Your cousin M^{rs} F. is a good soul: fortunate for you young man to have such a relation. "Her hints shew meaning, her allusions care." Her hopes & longings are towards practical holiness. She tries to do what she ought. To her the promise

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will be fulfilled "He that doeth the will of God shall know of the doctrine." She may have a doubt, but only long enough to prepare the mind to know & enjoy the truth. She may have a trouble, but only so long & so severe as to perfect some grace that God will approve in her. You are indebted to her for taking me so hurriedly to a stranger's house. God perfect in her all he loves to see & reward her for it, here & hereafter. Do, if you think of it some day, tell her how much I esteem her kind hospitality. I shall long remember it. I did not go to Montreal expecting acceptance of my person in any way. Accustomed to be looked upon as an extreme man such kindness confused me, rather than otherwise. It has taught me a lesson, w^h I am always practising, but have still been erring in (viz) not to judge of other people at all. Mr. Wood too, I remember with much pleasure & can communicate freely with now if necessary. The scientific men also. Prin^l Dawson & M^r Whiteve[?]. Could you not beg a bit of Eozoon Cana^a from him for me to grind. Might I venture to write him a line. I want to know about his sporangites, they are very curious. Your high power shews spines on them clearly. I want to know if he has written anything "in re" & where. I am ashamed to trouble him & ashamed also to remain in ignorance. The specimens you gave me are quite a treat. They got home all right. If you are acquainted with a botanist in M. ask him to name the three ferns we found on the mountain, the small one, the middle sized (both left with M^{rs} F.) & the large one. You will be glad to hear I am much better of my trip. I was not well all summer before I went away. My love to Jimmie when you see him. Remember me most kindly & thankfully to M^{rs} F. & with best wishes for yourself spiritually & temporally believe me Ever your very affect^e friend

W. A. Johnson

4 In a letter to his son written on Sunday, Oct. Johnson says:

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P.S. Dr. B. is much as usual. A good deal inclined to take to his bedroom. Feels the cold greatly. Overheated house has given M^{rs} Barwick a bad cold, but she seems to be getting better again.* W.A.J.

It is evident from this postscript that James Bovell was in Toronto for what proved to be his last visit in Canada. It is improbable that Osler failed to see him, but if he did there is no record of it.

From W. A. Johnson to James Bovell Johnson

"The Parsonage"
Weston Nov^r 22^d 1875

My dear Jimmie; I enclose you another cheque for \$25⁰⁰. Out of it please pay M^r Henderson for the little books he has sent & those he is to send, & let me have the a/c - What about X^{mas} are you coming home? or would you rather not? / Let me know so that I may arrange for you if necessary. I am very sorry to hear M^{rs} F. has typhoid fever: please make a point of calling for me & let me know how she is, & seems likely to do. I was going to send you a small box to put a few specimens into now you are becoming interested in the microscope. I see by Maggie's letter you have some diatoms: they are my delight, so be sure to let me see them. If you would try to get a little diatomaceous earth or fossil or modern foraminiferous earths &c or a bit of eozone &c &c I would enjoy it greatly. If there are any microscopists in Montreal the probability is they have plenty in bits of paper. I had any quantities before I disposed of the old case. If you are coming up at X^{mas} bring them with you & take a box back or if you want one I will send it by Express. I have tried to read Prin^l Dawson's book "Earth & Man" & it disgusts me.

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It will be some time before I buy a book of his again but it is not necessary to say so. Doubtless he is a good geologist ¹²² (ie) knows fossils but his reasonings &c & particularly his religious interminglings are worse than useless. It is to be lamented that all Geologists do not at once give up observations on Theology: & be satisfied with what Moses says, & is all they need (viz) that things animate & inanimate, the animal vegetable & mineral kingdoms were originally made by God & that 4 or 6000 years ago. He rearranged these kingdoms for a man or race of men to be made in His image. This does not exclude a pre-Adamite man so he be genus homo, bimanus with body & soul but not body soul & spirit as our homo is. Grikie a brother of D^r Grikie has written an admirable work ^h w^h Hind lent me. It is well worth studying for days together. My kindest rem^s to Prof^r Osler. If he were a geologist I would write enough to him about Dawson. Be sure you gather up some fragments of some kind, Human, animal, parasitic (I want some itch insect) vegetable, mineral. They fill up my spare moments & always remind me of the perfections of Him who made all things & saw they were very good. No news here. W. Grubb married. God grant you health & quiet determination to make the most of your opportunities, temporal & spiritual. Your loving father

W. A. Johnson.

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Judging from this letter it must have been soon after Father Johnson's visit that Mrs. Francis came down with a prolonged febrile attack of which Osler keeps her sister informed:

Miss.
To his cousin Jennette Osler from W. O.

Tuesday
[Montreal; circa 1875]

Dear Janet: - Marian continues but poorly but nothing definite can yet be said of the nature of her illness. Fever is the chief symptom, though it has never yet been high. She is easier than she was & takes plenty of beef-tea & milk. Her spirits are good. If it is to be Typhoid it will be in all likelihood a very mild case. Howard is looking after her with me & tomorrow if any decision is arrived at & you are wanted I shall telegraph. The children keep well. Beelzebub is Beelzebub & if for nothing else than to restrain his iniquities your presence would be acceptable. Gwyn is beginning to talk quite nicely & says "Ope" "Yes" & "More", the latter word especially; the daughter of the horse-leech could not have been more insatiable. I look after Marian at night, running up & down at intervals, & taking a nap on the chair or couch. She is a good patient patient & no trouble. . . . I hope you received my letter of Sunday. I should have written yesterday, but had a hard day and neglected it till too late

Love to all

Yours &c

WILLIE

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The recipient of this note, Osler's favourite cousin, was not a person to hesitate on receiving such news, and on hearing that her sister Marian was really ill and ^{realizing} that she could be of use, she packed up instantter and left Toronto to join the Francis household where, as she adds, she stayed for the next sixteen years. She has given this note of W.O's relation to the household.

"While we were living in Montreal Willie was a frequent visitor, especially during his later student years and his Professorship. We were then living on McGill College Avenue and he would look in almost every afternoon for 5 o'clock tea with Marian and the baby and dowager baby - successively Brick, Willie, Gwen and Bea - this explains the interest and affection he has always shewn for them - not so much for Brick who was always my special boy and who usually preferred to stay with me and the other elder children. He was like a breezy boy when not at work, would leap over the dining-table, dance, play tricks on the elder children, join in the rough-and-tumble pranks of the boys, sing, toss the babies (of which there was an unfailing supply)

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and pet and comfort the little girls and any small invalid. He was my dearest friend as well as cousin; we studied German together for a time, but the children left me little leisure or quiet and he very soon distanced me. He was the Well-beloved of the whole family and Willie F. adored him from his babyhood. He went regularly to church (St. John the Evangelist) and spoke of things religious with unfailing reverence."

from p. 49 *But all* *informally*
Throughout his life he was a great hand to drop in upon people for brief visits - all ^{too} brief for their recipients. In an article written long afterward in which he had occasion to speak of the malady that affected his friend and colleague, George Ross, he says:

"As a young man in Montreal there were two doors I never passed - 47 and 49 Union Avenue: going up I called on Dr. Palmer Howard, and if he was not in or was engaged I called on Dr. George Ross; going down the reverse. Any growth in virtue as a practical clinician I owe to an intimate association with these two men, in whom were combined in rare measure enthusiasm and clear vision." *

*~~Transient attacks of aphasia and paralysis in states of high blood pressure and arteriosclerosis.~~ Canadian Medical Association Journal, Oct., 1911, i, 919.

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At the Howards' where he invariably took his Sunday dinner, he was regarded as a member of the family, and rarely did a day pass when he did not drop in for a frolic with the young folks at 66 McGill College Avenue where the Francis cousins had taken up their abode. Reference has been made to his interest in old people, but this was more than equalled by his devotion to children, with whom he had the rare gift of putting himself immediately on terms of intimate familiarity. On first acquaintance he would coin unforgettable nicknames for them: one with curly hair and another with wide-open eyes remained always as "Bedsprings" and "Owl's eyes." He appreciated, too, a child's delight in repetition, so that vaulting the dining-room table at the Francis's was always demanded of him; and his pranks with children, some of which became proverbial, will ⁱⁿ ~~from~~ time be referred to. *But all*  *but*

With his advent successively in Montreal, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Oxford, a period of unusual activity of medical societies, of student gatherings and of literary production immediately set in, largely from the example of his own whole-hearted participation and his unusual popularity.

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Soon after his return to Montreal in 1874 he ^{had taken} ~~took~~ an active part in the revivifying ~~of~~ the old Medico-Chirurgical Society; ~~He~~ was immediately put on the Programme Committee with Roddick and Gardner; and for the succeeding ten years was a regular attendant at the monthly meetings. Most of the clinical papers emanating from the Montreal General were first presented before this Society, and there was hardly a meeting* in which he did not parti-

*Cf. records of these meetings in the Canada Medical & Surgical Journal, 1874-1884.

cipate in some way or another. Until the time of his own appointment on the hospital staff, even the brief clinical papers, medical or surgical, written by others, were usually supplemented by a pathological note, "By Dr. Wm. Osler" describing the tissues - a note which often contained, it may be added, the only portion of the communication at all original. It was a new thing for the profession to have a histological pathologist in their midst. Easily enthused himself by every novel condition, he infected all others with whom he came in contact with something of the same spirit, and

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as he worked for work's sake alone and cared more for giving others credit than for what he might gain, his reputation spread widely and soon went beyond his own community.

Another trait which had much to do with his development was his utter lack of Chauvinism. Though at this time there was much less inter-communication between men of different schools in different localities he took an early opportunity to run down to Boston and to familiarize himself with its medical traditions. There he not only looked up all his old Vienna friends but invaded the Boston Medical Library, then in its original humble quarters, where he found a hard-working librarian, Dr. Brigham, little accustomed to have this kind of sunshine invade his seclusion. The charm of the visitor was never forgotten, nor did Osler on his part fail, as will be seen, to remember this chance acquaintance in the years to follow. He must have paid a visit also at this time on Henry I. Bowditch, the leader of the Boston profession whom, with reason, he greatly admired. There remains a bound pamphlet in Osler's library - Bowditch's "Consumption in New England" -

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in which he has written:)

"Henry I. Bowditch was one of the finest characters I have ever met in the profession, with the true fire. I valued his friendship highly. I met him in 1875 and he introduced me to his nephew H. P. B. who became one of my dearest friends." W. O.

But with all this, it must not be forgotten that he has been hard at work in the smallpox wards, supposedly an immune, for though repeatedly vaccinated he had never had a successful 'take' and it is evident that meanwhile he mingled freely with friends and relatives. It was in this month of December, as near as can be told, that he came down with the disease himself, and in years to come he always cited his own case to illustrate the fallacy of the 'non-take' belief as an evidence of immunity which prevailed at that time.