

(Handwriting)

~~1028/79/19~~

(To Dr. H. V. Ogden from G. Cantlie)  
694 Dorchester St., Montreal. CUS417/79.20  
27th Dec., 1883.

Montreal *Jan 1*

My dear H. V.

'Twas my full purpose & intention to have written you an Xmas letter - however I spared you that imposition - & myself too - for really I had more than enough to do "with home & foreign" affairs without penning all in strange countries - I had your welcome letter with the pretty card the day before Xmas - for which many thanks - & also for your happy wishes. Now don't expect any news or anything else in this as the weather is damp & muggy - thereby effectually damping my spirits through the medium of my "middle ear" which duly heaves up on any variety of climate. Dr. Buller tells me to go to New Mexico - but unless he came with me - I would not start out - But Mon dieu!! - open your eyes ahead - & stare in blankness when you have seen - read -

"Dr. Frank Buller is actually engaged - "

I dare not tarnish such a statement, but leave it in grand parenthesis by itself and will now go on to qualify. The lady - or some might say "the woman" - is named "Langlois" - a Torontonion, I believe - who has resided in Montreal for several years with her sister, Mrs. Petterson whose husband is in the C.P.R. - I know the favoured young lady by sight merely - She is certainly a fine looking specimen of the feminine sex - Tall - stylish - well built - decidedly fine looking - tho perhaps tinged somewhat coarsely - fair complexion - & in general is attractive - perhaps too much so - As to her innate qualities - not knowing her I can't say - but she is certainly not the style of woman I should admire or even like - however - tastes differ I am happy to say. Now this is no joke - none whatever - as you might have seen on Thursday morning last when Dr. Buller came into my bedroom and made the confession - Vraiment it is true - & as Mrs. Francis says - alas -----  
For entre nous in society this same Miss Langlois does not stand by any means high and as a gentlemen said the other day she had "done St. James Street for five seasons" - in fact - in the crême de la crême she is not known - and I really can't say that the affair has received any enthusiastic (I don't mean dutiful) approbation - I had been asked about them several times but had never believed anything thinking Dr. B - would look in a different sphere for a mate - but as Mrs. Francis again says alas ----- which means a heap - I would not say that her reputation is tarnished but certainly the talk of her would lead one to suppose so - However if they are satisfied 'tis well tho. I must say I could not congratulate my landlord with any show of spirit - but such is life. You must needs write to congratulate him yourself - He is home at present - but returns next Monday -

The other news of interest is the arrival of Mrs. Francis 9th - a son - But there was a great joke about this. A week before the birth I was speaking to Dr. Osler - per telephone - when he informed me Mrs. F. brought forth twin daughters that day - In all truth I told my friends of such - and it was not until Dr. Buller congratulated Mr. Francis at the club that I found Dr. O - had perpetrated an unpardonable hoax on me - I am ashamed to go near the house now as they all know of it - however - twill pass over - This last is an Xmas day child - so must be very good - weighs 12 lbs - I saw Marjorie on Xmas day on her way to the rink looking remarkably well in her skating costume.

But what think ye. I had the distinguished honour of dining with Mrs. Howard at the family dinner on Xmas day. It was quite a family affair - being for the two children - just Miss Smith - on whose acct. I suppose I was invited. Ruttan - the silent Dr. Stewart & myself. I think Mrs. Howard - excepting perhaps Miss Osler & Mrs. Francis - is the cleverest most brilliant woman I have met in Montreal - Actually she is charming though, I don't know but that I might be afraid of her were I in any way of being under her power - but without doubt she is a lady and a clever one at that - And if she be so-intensely more so is little Muriel - I don't think I ever met a little girl of such delightful manners - perhaps too much mannerism - and cleverness - It is really marvellous her power of talk & wit and she will be an exact reproduction of her mother. The old Dr. is very nice - tho. quiet in his own abode - but Miss Smith & I agree that the Dr. is really conceited - more especially before ladies - & he still twirls his moustache as much as ever. Dr. Stewart is a clever mummy - is I can use such an expression - that is to say - never speaks except when

spoken to - but his answers show his ability when he does dare open his lips - He is an immensely stout man - would impress you with laziness & inertia - & rather a common type of features & must be deep because he is not brilliant. He is a regular stay-at-home - studies all the time - goes nowhere into society - & lives for himself & his students, who I believe are very fond of him - & laud him to the skies - I fancy he is really a first class fellow when you get to know him but he is so silent & uncommunicable 'tis hard to do so. Dr. Osler is as usual at home at this season - but returns next week - I do wish he would marry some wealthy woman - 'twould be a great boon to him ~~xxx~~ Speaking of marriages there are several more engagements - the most interesting & recent being Dr. Dick Macdonnell to Miss McLennan - Hugh's daughter - a very plain woman - truly - but of good stock.

Friday. My mental arrangements were so dulled by yesterday's horrid weather that I had to break off as above - & go home to sleep - and be at rest - 'Tis strange the change in the atmosphere should so affect me as it does - To-day is bright & so am I - I told you of Dick's engagement - and I know some ladies who would have given fingers & toes to get him. He is really a prime favourite in society & amongst his confreres - and a very steady fellow. The students complain of Howard Sr's exams. in anatomy - seemingly quite different to the course they have been accustomed to - but he is a new and important addition - at least in his own eyes - to the McGill staff - and time perhaps may work some change - He has a grinding class of 8 - continually longs for London - and detests & abhors everything & everybody American so where are you? I had merely a beautiful Xmas card from Roger tho, I wrote him a screed a yard long - however he may pen me at New Year - I went to mid-night mass at Notre Dame - but was disappointed - the only fine solo being that one you know "Noel" voici le redempteur - I stayed until the whole performance was over & was much interested in the maneuvering of the priest - & do you know there is something really very solemn in their ritual - On Xmas morning I went to St. James - where there should have been excellent music - but the organist - a new one - was unable to attend his duties - & it fell rather stale - not one solo - Got several Xmas presents - the best one being an Orchestra chair ticket for "Patti" - which means \$8 - I never knew what opera & singing really were before - "La Traviata" was her piece - & she only played once here - Of course I only heard Albain & Nillisson in concert & I was charmed with them both but, in my estimation Patti completely outstrips them - tho. of course I saw her to greater advantage - Not only is her singing perfection - but her acting too - & usually these songsters are miserable actors - & I am not sure but that her dramatic powers are as good as her vocal - certainly they do a great deal to raise them - But not only was she excellent - but the toute ensemble was. Nicolini was to have sung but cold prevented him & the exponent of his part tho. a good singer - was not up to the mark - The chorus was grand but very little it had to do - & the orchestra under "Ardite" was perhaps as enjoyable as any - The ballet so-so and stupid things they are at best - The adventure in opera here has proved a failure & prices were too stiff for Montreal - the lowest standing room being \$4 - Gerster sings tonight and as admission has been reduced to \$2 I may go - but I do not like to destroy Patti's spell - and nothing more delightful could I wish to hear - I vowed I was not going to give any Xmas presents but when the time came I found I was in the liberal season fever - I got a present of a beautiful pair of opera glasses from my cousin - come in very handy - The third Miss Abbott is engaged to young Hennecker & being a Sherbrooke young man you may know him - My cousins got two oil paintings of poor Alice but they are very miserable portraits in my estimation. Mr. Macnider has come to reside with us but he is painfully quiet & does not break the monotony of our dull establishment. I don't know where I shall go when the wife comes in - though Dr. Buller says I am to remain where I am - but - I have still my reading class twice a week & they come this afternoon - but the rink is the great attraction at present - tho. I don't go to it - Miss Kale, Quebec is engaged to her cousin Hugh Allan - Andrew's second son - & they are delighted - but I think it is a very unadvisable match - as apart from near kinship there is insanity & you would think that would be a barrier. You remember that awful Miss Hastie - the aesthetic fool - well it is reported she is engaged to that young lame fellow Nichols - but I don't believe it - I heard Mr. Francis has gone to England - but on no authentic authority - however I won't regret his absence - Had a photo of my brother in London - taken in Cairo - with his helmet on & looks quite foreign but very like him - He too is engaged - as there seems to be a fever at present in the matrimonial market - Dr. B- will have to "lay out" now to an enormous extent - and he has no idea of the requirements of a household - nor will he be very liberal in furnishing & c<sup>1</sup> fancy. I really have no news of any interest - write me soon again - & with best wishes for a happy & prosperous New Year. I am  
Yours ever, G. Cantle