

1028/69/2

probably inserted in a family
CU5417/69.2

(Scrap torn from letter to Miss
Jennette Osler)

[London]

[Circa January, 1873]

"This is private & confidential"

McGill College was foolish enough to offer me about six weeks ago the Chair of Botany in the University. Botany is a thing I know next to nothing about & is a subject I could not get up - with my other studies - in the time I have to spend here: consequently I have sent a polite refusal. I am afraid - from his letter to me - that Dr Howard expected me to accept it, but really I would have made an ass of myself in so doing & that is not to my mind. What I am vexed about is - if I am right in my supposition - that it should have been mentioned. I hope Dr Howard did not tell any one but yourselves & pray goodness you have not sent it west of course the Paternal as well as many others will think I was just as fitted to take Botany as anything else but I should feel like an imposter in a chair such as that, the subject matter of which had been my study for a short 15 or 18 months. I shall probably return to Montreal, but it will be as a private practitioner, & - unless any further offer is made which I do not expect - not in connection with McGill. I do wish you would not build upon me for doing anything beyond my fellows. My abilities are but moderate and I can feel-bitterly sometimes - that deficiencies in early education and want of thoroughness drag me back at every step. In addition to all this I have my bread to earn: so that general medical studies demand the time which might be spent in acquiring - perhaps - a reputation

One thing is certain, viz cultivation of those scientific pursuits at the expense of paying oneself an injustice to oneself & - if he has one - his family

On prayers for the dead I will write in my next but it has always seemed to me a doctrine which concerned itself to the affections rather than Heaven.

With much love

Yours Willie

Keep dark about that offer if it has not already got round Excuse the haste