"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 for ever. There are few, very few, conditions in this world, in wh 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 opinion I could not differ; one does 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 spot over & again recalls 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 moralise a little, & of course you do; how strangely few friends we have (visible ones, I mean) of whom we can say thes! 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 wh 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 specially 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 examination 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 may be fairly argued I can not, because I do not understand any thing 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

re Jimmie. (2)

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 depriration. Of course any thing you can throw in his way, or any thing 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. wh. 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

Small pox hospital 1876 (?)
W.A. remitting the fees of "Jeannie"

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. Every thing 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.e friend,

W. A. Johnson