

Canada for Gentlemen

James Seton Cockburn

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CANADA FOR GENTLEMEN,

BEING

LETTERS

FROM

JAMES SETON COCKBURN.

The difficulty of sending my son's letters to the numerous friends who are interested in seeing them, without wearing out the Manuscript, has induced me to have them printed. It is hoped, also, that they may be useful in giving information regarding some of the difficulties of young emigrants, of which so little is said by the Agencies, though the experience they teach is often more valuable than that of uniform success. The only alterations made in these letters (intended only for the home circle) has been in substituting fictitious names for those of friends. It may seem a paradox that a price should be attached to letters intended only for private circulation, but I am not without hope of being able to provide the writer with his winter furs (greatly to his own surprise), in return for the pleasure and information which his letters have undoubtedly given.

S. Cockburn.

LETTERS FROM JAMES SETON COCKBURN.

North Western Hotel, Liverpool.

August 20th, '84.

Dear Mother,

I write this before turning in, and, as you will observe, with a beast of a pen. We arrived here all safe, and with all our traps. Though I lost the run of my bag at Bristol in the scurry, it turned up here all right.

There were a lot of people waiting on the Warren to wave to us. I recognised Miss Linton, and I think some of the Seymours. Miss Harley met us at Star Cross to say another good-bye, with a button-hole for me and a note, and a flint-and-steel for Henry.

We were collared when we got here by an agent of some sort, who was going to free us from all trouble by seeing our luggage safely on board, but as he kept a low kind of Temperance Hotel, and smelt very strongly of whisky, I declined his services, chiefly I should say, on the instigation of a good-natured cabby. Of course, for aught I know, it may be the proper thing to go in for these sort of chaps, but it's bent to be on the safe side.

Must shut up now, and go to sleep.

Best love to everybody,

Your loving Son, J. SETON COCKBURN.

S.S. Montreal, En Route For Canada.

August 21st, '84.

My Dearest Mother,

We are not going to touch at any Irish port, so I am hurrying to write a few lines to send off by the Pilot.

The weather is beautiful, and we have got the cabin to ourselves.

I have already made some very nice acquaintances; altogether it bids fair to be very jolly.

We got down to the dock in very good time, though of course with a good deal of bother, but we've not got *rooked* anywhere.

I am afraid you will not hear from us again till the letters bear a foreign post mark.

With best love and wishes to everybody,

Your loving Son, J. SETON COCKBURN.

My Dearest Mother,

I suppose we are both addressing our letters to you, which might at first appear an unequal distribution of our favours, but as I know they will be read aloud to the assembled breakfast table, it is a small matter who opens the envelope. To begin with, I should explain that I am writing in the saloon of the S.S. Montreal, Sunday evening, August 30th (I believe), and it is due to the constructural defects thereof that my writing is of a somewhat shaky character, the above saloon being placed almost immediately over the propeller, whose various eccentricities in the way of jumping and shaking are more than distinctly felt. However, I do not want to begin by telling you about the end of our voyage, so I will make a commencement at the time we lost sight of the heads and hats of those who saw us off at Dawlish Station. I feel rather ashamed to say I felt at that time very little depression of spirits, perhaps the pipe to which I immediately had recourse had a comforting influence; perhaps my familiarity with all objects on the road, at least as far as Star Cross, made me feel as though I had not yet left home; or perhaps, it was the secret consciousness that all the Seymours, Lintons, and Harleys had promised to be on the Warren to see us wave our heads out of the window. Whatever the course might have been during the whole of our railway journey, our stay at the hotel, and even *some* hours subsequently, I felt almost jolly, but what a world of misery lies implied in that underlined *some*. However, I won't anticipate, but relate from the beginning the history of my ideas and experiences up to the present time. There is little that you do not already know connected with our departure from the docks and our journey as far as the last light ship, that is concerning incidents which would appear to be worth mentioning. We were rather fortunate in seeing nearly all the most celebrated of the Atlantic steamers. The City of Rome was lying alongside a wharf within a stone's throw of us, the Alaska, Arizona, America, and Oregon, were all passing in or out, or lying at the wharves, these being I believe the four fastest ocean steamers afloat. The Allan boat Peruvian left the dock just astern of us, and as we afterwards discovered, arrived twelve hours before us. We very soon found, when dinner time came round that we were going to live like fighting cocks; there was a tremendous spread, soup, fish, entrées, joints, entrees, sweets, cheese, dessert and bills of fare. We looked forward to ten days of systematic fattening, an excellent preparation as we thought for our troubles to come in the way of struggles for bread, in the country to which we were journeying. What a mistake! That meal we fattened, also at the ensuing meal, a kind of high tea at six o'clock we continued the process. At breakfast next morning all operations were suspended, and by the time the sun shone in the zenith for the second time, the *modus operandi* was completely inverted, and we thinned many inches in as many minutes. All the preparations for carrying out our original intentions stared us in the face, but we turned anything but a hungry eye upon them; to tell the prosaic truth we were both sea-sick. Not a fair knock down exactly, for while on deck I was all right. What started the malady was the sleeping cabin such an abomination of closeness, stuffiness, and all the odours under the sun I never smelt it was literally enough to knock one down. Not that the cabins themselves are badly ventilated, but they vent into the gangways outside, which in bad weather are themselves very short of fresh air. Only on two days were we able to have our port-hole open, and then not for the whole day. The first day on board was very pleasant, nice weather, and lots of excitement in watching the different coasts we passed, and studying our fellow passengers. We were never out of sight of land until it got too dark to see it. Before England was hull down, the Isle of Man was hull up, and then before that faded, the coast of Ireland would have been in sight had it not been invisible. When daylight went down a breeze sprang up, blowing steadily from the westward, still it was all very jolly, and we went to bed very comfortably and slept very soundly till we woke up. The day had just broken, and it was a fine breezy morning. At first I was delighted to feel myself dancing about. I sat up and looked out of my port-hole and watched the sea for a bit; suddenly she rose to an extra big one; I could feel her tilting up, and I had to lean forward a bit to maintain my balance, then the stern tilted up and I leant back a good long way, then the other end of her rose again, higher still, but I only leant further back, and by the time it was all over I had resumed an horizontal position, and resolved, like the man in Happy Thoughts, not to move again whatever happened. I soon felt all right again, and was able to reply in a very swagger voice to Henry's rather meek enquiry concerning the state of the weather. By-and-bye a short interchange of experiences occurred between Henry and a boy who had been put into our third berth at the last moment, the latter in the innocence of his youth frankly avowed himself awful squasy inside, and soon proceeded practically to demonstrate the truth of his assertion. Henry embraced the opportunity

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of confession, and soon became equally demonstrative. I still felt happy, and gave them some excellent advice, so much in fact, that I began to feel I had been too liberal, and that I wanted some myself; however I dressed quickly, and went on deck, and once there I soon began to feel hungry, though when I went down below to have breakfast I didn't make a very hearty meal. After that the weather began to get bad, and continued getting bad for a long time. Then for some days, as sure as I went down below for a meal I did violence to the sentiment of the old proverb wilful waste makes woeful want. However, in a few days I recovered sufficiently to withstand the noxious influences of the saloon long enough to satisfy my hunger. We had bad weather, more or less the whole way across to Belle Isle; not a gale exactly, except once on Saturday or Sunday night, I forget which, but it just blew more or less, hard enough to keep the decks always wet, and to preclude the possibility of a smoke, or even of walking up and down. Then as we got over to the Canadian side there was a good deal of fog knocking about in fact take it all round I did not enjoy myself very much, it was cold and wet and I couldn't smoke. However, when it did come to an end it was A1. The day we sighted Belle Isle was beautiful, and after that we had no more bad weather, it was all clear and bright, which was very fortunate at that part of the voyage, as it is in going down the Straits and through the Gulf that fog is such a source of delay. There was lots to be seen there in the way of coast scenery, Belle Isle, Labrador, Newfoundland, Anticosti, and the Banks of the St. Lawrence. At first all the land was uncultivated and wild looking, but as we got into narrower waters farther up the river it began to get cultivated lots of white houses with red roofs kicking about, and very often not a hedge or a tree to be seen except just near the river, all cleared and consequently ugly.

Everybody about this part of the world is French, and such French too as they talk. I have'nt caught the meaning of one word since I have been here. I forgot to say that though I began this letter on board the Montreal I am now writing at an Hotel in Sherbrooke. It was very funny to see the changes that took place in the attire of some of the passengers when we were nearing Quebec. People (among whom perhaps I ought to class myself) who had remained unshaved and disreputable during the voyage, in old clothes, etc., now come out of their cabins looking Bond Street mashers (bar me); they were all those who had come out for amusement and whose journies mostly finished with the voyage; the others who preserved a travel-stained appearance were all going further on, some long distances, and some short. Among the long-distance people was a doctor Marsh, who was going to Brandon, some distance beyond Winnipeg, with his family, or at least with part of it the rest are there already. He was a nice man indeed, and gave us some very useful advice and information, including his address. He is strongly of opinion that the North West is the place for both Henry and me, but at the same time he quite agreed with me that it would be foolish to go out there in the face of the near approach of winter without the certainty of work, which would keep us going through it. He has a son on a survey staff somewhere out there, and he says he thinks I should be able to get on too. When at last we got up alongside the wharf he was of great service to us; he has been backwards and forwards several times and knows the ropes well. He took us to an exchange office where he said we should get the most value for our money, which turned out to be \$4 86c., about par I believe. He and everyone else that I asked said that the idea of a premium on English money was a myth, that \$4 86c. was the highest, and that only in gold; for a fiver that Dr. Marsh exchanged he only got \$24 instead of \$24 30c. Well, we shall see when we get to Montreal and deliver the circular notes. The landing and all the Customs business was a great nuisance, though we got through capitally. I waited quietly till the hoorooche was all over, and then went and collared the most benevolent-looking old chap to come and stir up our baggage. I had them all unstrapped and ready, and he just looked into one or two and then asked me if I had anything in them that was not my own wearing apparel, or that had not been worn. I said no (there were lots of things that hadn't been worn, but then they *were* my own wearing apparel), so he chalked them all up without even desiring that Henry's big box might be opened, which was very lucky, as it would have been a great nuisance to have to knock those plates off the keyholes. I think it is a great mistake to put them on; there is no fear of the things getting wet down in the steerage deck where they are stowed, and they may possibly cause a lot of delay going through the Customs House. Then came our first experience of Canadian Railways, *not* a pleasant one. We were told the train would start at 2.15, accordingly we dispensed with dinner and were on the platform at the stated time, but the train never moved till nearly five o'clock. Then the baggage chequing business turned out a great nuisance, the men went down to cheque it while I was away getting the tickets, and when I came back they had all gone away. In this democratic country they could not be put to the inconvenience of coming back again, so I had to wait about till they came to

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cart it up to the train. I do not mean to say there would be any of this bother in travelling about from station to station, it was only during the confusion of landing when a lot of people all wanted their things done at the same time, and the baggage all had to be brought up from the wharf, still it was an item in our first railway experiences which, coupled with the delay in starting, put me out of temper with Canadian travelling, though there is not a shadow of doubt but what the chequing system is a great deal superior to our own. However, when we did get fairly under weigh it was not so bad. It is certainly very nice to be able to get up and walk about when one gets tired of sitting still, or go and stand on the platforms outside. Then, their rules are far less strict than ours. If a man likes to jump on or off while a train is going full speed ahead he can, nobody has the least objection to his coming down on his head if he likes; or if he feels inclined to jump off and run alongside he is perfectly at liberty to do so, only the Company will not bind themselves to stop and wait for him if he can't run fast enough. In fact, a man here is entirely his own master, and as such is just as good as anybody else. There is one thing which seems to me a great disadvantage, that is so few of the railway officials are in any uniform at all. They may have a badge, or something of that sort, but I did not see any, consequently one never knows who to ask for information about the trains, etc. When we got to Richmond last night, where we had to change for Sherbrooke, a chap told us we should start in about twenty-five minutes; the next man told us that we should not start till two or three in the morning; and while we were endeavouring to arrive at the truth somebody shouted out to know if everybody was on board for Sherbrooke, Portland, etc., and he told us they were going to start right away, which they did in about half-an-hour. Next we took two hours to go the twenty-five miles between Richmond and Sherbrooke, though I will forgive them for that as we were really in a goods' train, to which they had attached a passenger car for our convenience. We eventually got in here about twelve last night. We did not go to the Magog House as Horton recommended, as it was a good long way from the station, and, we were told, might not be open. This place, the Sherbrooke Hotel, is just opposite the station, so being very tired and not wanting any bother we came in here. We got into conversation with a man at Richmond who turned out to be an Agricultural Agent of some sort, he had been Horton's foreman on his farm many years ago, and knew them all very well. He turned out a very decent old chap, and a Scotchman, and he was very useful to us in getting us a feed, etc., when we got here, otherwise we should have had to go supperless to bed. This morning (Tuesday), we went first thing to see Allen, he was very cordial and obliging, and withal very encouraging; he did not give vent to any decided opinions, but he thought it very possible that Mr. Hill, of whom Mr. Horton spoke, and to whom we are to be introduced to-morrow, might be able to get me work on the Canada Pacific Railway, with which he is in some way connected. I sincerely hope he may, as I should then get a free pass to the West. *Wednesday*. We saw Hill this morning, he could do nothing in the way of getting us work, but he gave us a lot of names and addresses which turned out useful, among others a letter to a chap called Ibotson, a sort of emigration agent, asking him to send us round to several farms which he mentioned. We went round to a heap of people with an old chap called Kemp, who is something to do with the something Colonization Society. The worst of it was we had to hire a trap, as the distance to be covered was considerable; that cost \$3, but it was the only thing to be done. Everybody assured us that nothing but a personal interview would be any use, so we cruised about the country in a very nice little buggy for five hours under the escort of old Kemp, and I must say we should have been nowhere without him. I should never have known how to conduct the business with some of the specimens we came across, not to mention that we should have been sure to have lost ourselves half-a-dozen times over, and so should not have seen half the number of people. Well, the upshot of the day's campaign was that I think Henry stands a good chance of a place. Everyone assures me that he could not do better than go to the farm in question. It belongs to an old man called Crabtree, or something like that, I don't know exactly how he spells himself. He is a very rough-and-tumble old fellow, but, it seems, a capital farmer, and a good honest dealing man. He has one of the best farms in the county, and is very well off, having made all his money on his farm. Henry would get his board and lodging, and most probably somewhere about \$10 a month besides. Of course nothing is fixed yet; the old chap's wife was away, and he could do nothing without consulting her, but he said he would want help during the winter, and he would not engage anyone without letting us know. He cannot, however, do anything for the next fortnight, which is a nuisance. None of the others that, we called on came to very much, so we are going up to Montreal to-night to deliver introductions and stir up the mud generally. Both Ibotson and Kemp are going to make enquiries for us here, and write to us if anything turns up. It's very good of them, they have both taken a lot of trouble, and it's all done for love. In fact everybody is most good-natured, and willing to do everything in their power to help us.

My Dearest Mother,

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They all say they have no doubt we shall be able to get work very soon, but it cannot be done in a day; so it seems to me, having got these two old fellows to look out for us here, we had better go and present ourselves in Montreal, and so be as it were in two places at once. Moreover, I should like to see Roland Stanley if possible before I clinch any bargain. We are perfectly certain of getting disinterested advice from him, though I see no reason whatever to doubt the policy of what I have done or the intentions of our backers. I don't know if I have made all our doings and plans sufficiently clear. I am writing in a very rambling sort of way, but that is a fault inseparable from having to write at odd times. We are living here for about a dollar a day each, not at all bad, with three good big meals included, still it's spending money instead of making it, so I hope it won't last long. It's not such a bad beginning, though, when you come to think of it, we've only had two clear days in the country, and Henry is in a very fair way to be settled at a really good farm. Apart from business, the drive this afternoon was delightful, the country in places quite equal to any in Devonshire, though always with something wild looking about it. In some parts of the road it looked just exactly like England, so long as we did not look too far away. Upon the hills, etc., there is always a lot of pine-wood and stuff which does not look English, but it's all pretty; I believe you would like it immensely. Sherbrooke itself is a jolly little town, though I believe here it is considered a good big one, and a place of some importance. I think I shall have to bring this to an end now; I don't know exactly when the mail leaves Montreal, and I don't want to miss it through not being ready, so if I have time to add anything more it will take the form of a postscript. I don't know the least what address to give, our movements are so uncertain. Couldn't father write to Roland Stanley and ask him to forward the letters to us? I think, if he seems the right sort of chap, I will ask him about this when I see him, at any rate I can let him know when we leave, where we are going to, and then if any of you should have sent a letter to him he will know where to forward it to. Give my love to the Father, and Old Daddy and Muriel, and everybody else,

And believe me,

Your loving Son. J. SETON COCKBURN.

P.S. Friday. Must post this this morning, so must look sharp. Roland Stanley was away on a fishing expedition. We saw his daughter. She said her father would probably be home on Friday or Saturday, so we decided to lie in wait for him in diggings, and to call again on Monday. I had no idea his place was so far away from Montreal six-and-a-quarter miles by rail including the Victoria Bridge, which puts a lot on to the fare, and a good two miles by road. His name was not in the Directory, so we had to find this place by asking for it when we got to St. Lamberts. Charles Holloway also was out when we called at his office I believe so we are going down to the city to look for him this morning. We also called on Mrs. Fenton, but she was out, so we gave in and jacked it up for the day, as by that time it was nearly six o'clock. We had a fearful bother in finding them, as there were no numbers on the introductions, and there are about 1000 houses in Sherbrooke Street. The diggings we have got into will do very well for the time. We have taken them for a week at \$5 each, board and lodging, which I think is about as cheap as we can get them anywhere in Montreal. Our address is 60, Aylmer Street, but it's not a bit of use writing to us here, as we should be gone long before the letter reached us. I don't suppose we shall be here much more than a week. I will write more fully what we are doing by next mail.

J. S. C.

I am not sure if I have got the leads which I got for my ink pencil. If they are in the right hand top drawer of your writing table, will you send them when you send my goggles?

Have not done anything about money yet for want of advice. It's no use sending letters to Roland Stanley, he's too far away from Montreal. He must wait till we get more settled. Please remember me to everybody, particularly the Miss Bruces.

My Dearest Mother,

Canada for Gentlemen

60, Aylmer Street, Montreal,

September 9th, 1884.

My Dear Mother,

This letter is following pretty close on the heels of the other one. and for this reason: I can't find any letter of introduction to Dr. A. Howel or to Mrs. A. Howel, or any instructions as to calling without an introduction in the epitome of my letters which father gave me. I can't have lost it. You put them all up in a bundle, and I never saw them till I opened my portmanteau at Sherbrooke. Certainly I gave them to Henry to look over while I was writing as he sat beside me, but he was so almost immoderately careful that I do not think he can possibly have mislaid any of them. Anyhow it's not here. If I am obliged to leave Montreal before I hear from you I shall call on him and make my own explanations. But I don't know how I could do that either, for I don't know if he was father's friend or whether we got the introduction from someone else. Well, I shall hang on as long as I can, and then go and beard him in his den as a last resource. Now that's all the business I have to mention; it's a bad job, but it can't be helped. Perhaps, after all, I never had an introduction, and ought just to have called and mentioned the father. I know he gave me a lot of directions when he read the list over, but I can't remember them all, and only against one has he made a note that no introduction is necessary. Yet there are about half-a-dozen to whom I have not got letters, but whose names occur the same as Roland Stanley. We've been hunting round, kicking up no end of a dust, and called on and badgered scores of people. I have already been twice to see a man called Van Haughton. He is some sort of a boss on the Canadian Pacific Railway, and I am going again to-morrow, though they don't want any men at least not ordinary men but I am going to try and convince them that I am something extraordinary. The ten pounds loose cash we brought out will only last us another fortnight, but I have great hopes that Henry will not need to draw more. Roland Stanley very kindly took him to a farm to-day, a few miles from here, to see a man he knew, but the chap wanted £50 per annum, so we declined. I was not able to go as I had an appointment, but I don't think it made any difference, though they didn't do any bargaining, only just asked him if he would take him, and he said he would for the above-named sum. Some of the introductions we brought out have been very useful that to the Darwins particularly. George, the elder son (I think) is a jewel. I believe he would pop his Sunday coat if he thought it would do us any good. He is strongly of opinion that Henry should advertise for a job. He says he is certain that he would get lots of answers. But I think it will be better to wait till we see what happens at Sherbrooke, as by all accounts he could not do better than go to old Crabtree. I think, with the prospect of his being shortly settled there, you might write and explain (if possible) the matter of the introduction if we are not here they can forward the letter. 8 p.m. We have just been down to the station to fetch some of our baggage, having been told that we should have to pay for it if we let it lie there, and as we did not wish to bestow any portion of our capital on cabbies, we carried it up. The consequence is I feel like this [Illustration: Hand bent at wrist.] as Pot would say. The weather has been that hot since we came. By-the-bye, I meant to say when I said that we had just been down to the station, that as I felt so limp from carrying baggage on a hot night, you would have to put up with bad writing, but I see it's just as good as what I started with. It would all be better if Henry was'nt writing too at the same table I mean which, being one of the round one-legged arrangements usually met with in boarding-houses, is scarcely equal to the weight of eloquence which he brings to bear upon it. I wonder what he's writing about. You might just let me know what he says next time you write. He's just bought some new pink paper to write upon, and has already started several times with a most careful beginning, so it ought to be something worth hearing. I have suggested that he should give you his ideas concerning the crops of this country, but his innate modesty debars him from giving an opinion on a subject upon which he confesses himself at present profoundly ignorant, notwithstanding that we went yesterday afternoon (there being nothing else which could be done,) to the great Dominion Agricultural Show, as befitted the incipient farmer, and that I there carefully explained to him the points of interest of all the exhibits in relation to which I was convinced that he was as ignorant as myself. I am afraid, however, that he was rather inclined to treat my explanations with levity, owing to a base and misleading practice resorted to by the Committee, of hanging up beside the stalls, though in not very conspicuous places, a statement of the supposed race or species of each

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animal. These prejudicial placards for a long time escaped my notice, so that I was unable to fortify his perceptions with an account of the pig-headedness of Agricultural Committees in this respect. The only thing that I was entirely unable to explain, and the reason for which I could by no means fathom, was the pertinent enquiry constantly occurring, why should one cow be given a first prize and another none at all, when the only difference to the mind of a just and impartial observer consisted in the variety of their attitudes or colour. Being thus baffled in my attempts at edification, we adjourned to see some niggers manufacturing tobacco.

Thursday evening. I have just had a letter from Allen, saying that he had three letters and a parcel waiting for us, so Henry has gone down in great excitement with a post-card to tell him to send them on as soon as possible. I wonder if they are from any of you people, though I don't know what should make you think of addressing to us there. It was rather a rummy thing his finding out our address, for we didn't leave any; but just the other day, when looking over the things in my despatch-box, I found a letter to Allen in Mr. Horton's handwriting. I had'nt the least recollection of his having given me anything of the sort, but I posted it down to Sherbrooke forthwith, together with a note, making the best excuses I could for not having delivered it before when I was on the spot, and of course I put my address on the top. I should'nt wonder if one of the letters was the lost introduction, which must have been left behind by some mistake. We have been hunting about no end since we came here; calling on everybody, from the man in the moon downwards, but do not at present seem to have derived much benefit from it. I daresay Henry has told you of a wild scheme in which Mr. Barnes wanted us to engage. He is a most excellent old gentleman, the personification of good nature and kindness, but is a good deal of a visionary on the agricultural settlement question. When we called upon him on Saturday, he pressed us most eloquently to up stick and go west with a friend or connection of his, who was starting at nine o'clock on Monday morning. He so far prevailed upon me that, in case there should be anything in what he said, I went down to the bank and drew sufficient money for our fares, and then returned to lunch with him and the gentleman in question, a Mr. Deacon. In conversation with him afterwards, he (Mr. Deacon) strongly advised us to do no such thing. A branch line from the Canadian Pacific Railway, from Regina to a place called Sussex, about thirty miles or so, which was to have been graded this fall, and was to give me almost certain work for the winter, would probably not be begun for some time, and the land which Mr. Barnes had understood was along the railway in a tolerably well-peopled district, turned out to be at the head of Long Lake, eighty-four miles from Sussex, which is thirty miles from Regina, not that those distances are anything great, but it meant, in plain English, going and starting a farm 110 miles from the nearest railway station, without a particle of knowledge or experience. Still, we should have got the land for nothing; that much was promised; and had I seen any chance amounting to five to one that I should not have to spend my own money during the winter, I should have gone, and, once well acquainted with the country, I think we should have been able to live upon our land in some way till I could trust myself to invest in a few implements. There must be a fearful amount of gammon in the talk about this country somewhere. I was told in fact we were all told that living in the country was very cheap, and that living in Montreal was dear, but according to Deacon it is just the reverse. He said he did not think we could live in Regina, or thereabouts, supposing we got nothing to do, under ten or twelve dollars a week, instead of five which we pay here. I don't say that I believe it; someone must be in the wrong; and until we can find out for ourselves it is impossible to say who it is. It may just as well be Deacon as anyone else. Still, it would have been unwise to go west so soon on pure speculation. The end of it was the gentleman started away by himself, and Mr. Barnes said we were quite right to stop where we were. He said, somehow or other, he had managed to get a wrong impression of the whole affair. He has since exerted himself a great deal in making enquiries in Henry's behalf, and he gave me an introduction to a young fellow in the Harbour Commissioner's office, which, however, did not prove of much value. We have had to take our present diggings for another week, not having been able to get finished up here in time. I do not want to leave the place and leave any stone unturned, and there are several people I can see yet. We see Roland Stanley nearly every day, at a fish and game club where he introduced us, and which forms a most convenient meeting place, &c. Like everyone else, he is very good-natured, but his power of assisting us, so far, seems to lie chiefly in his willingness to do so had he the power. He has given over his farm to his son, and only kept his house and a few acres, comprising his garden chiefly, so there is no chance of his taking either of us. Holloway and Darwin are our two next best men; they are both young, and both back us up most energetically. We are going to spend the evening to-morrow with the Darwins, and on Sunday evening we dine with the Holloways, which is a great

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improvement on a crowded boarding-house. The latter is a partner in a well-to-do hardware establishment, which means to say they import all sorts of saws, chisels, axes, hammers, etc., from Sheffield; and the latter is accountant in a bank here. He has got a mother and two sisters, both possessing every claim to amiability. Holloway went with me on Wednesday to the Grand Trunk Railway Works, and introduced me to several people, and boosted me all he knew, but it was no go, they sacked seventy-five men last month, and are going to do the same again this month, things are that slack. Yesterday he took me down to the Canadian Pacific Works, but the man we wanted was away, so we are going again on Monday. There is also another man I am going to see on Monday, who has a good-sized iron-foundry. I went down there to-day, but he was out of town. Also I am going to see another engineer to-morrow, so you see I am not done yet. I saw the son of President Arthur, of the United States of America, this afternoon, at the club, where he was detailing his sporting adventures, having been away all summer in California and the Rockies, fishing and shooting, which he seems to have done in a very luxurious manner, to judge from his conversation. He talked about having engaged a Pulman Hunting Car for his trip, &c., and, apropos of fishing, said he had seen two natives netting salmon in some river or other, so he stopped the train while he went to look on and try his hand at it. By-the-bye, tell old Daddy that the pocket-book he gave me has turned out the most useful thing in my possession, barring coin; in fact, without it I should have been stumped, and had to buy one before I left Liverpool. The little one you gave me would never have held all the cards, letters, and business communications I have had to cram into it. In fact, I verily believe its bulky proportions and imposing air have obtained me an interview with many a big gun when I should have been politely bowed out had I not produced it with the sternness of a highwayman drawing his pistol, when I presented my card. I must shut up or I shall lose the mail. Henry is writing also by this post, but I wanted to tell you about the Howel introduction. With best love to everybody all round,

Believe me,

Your loving Son, J. SETON COCKBURN.

60 Aylmer Street, Montreal, P.Q.,

Sept. 20th, '84.

My Dear Pot,

I daresay you would like to hear my opinions concerning the manners and customs, *alias* professional resources of this much talked of country. When you told me that if I expected to drop in for an appointment such as I would take in England after a fortnight's search, I should be disappointed, you only predicted half the truth. As far as I can see at present, it is equally a matter of difficulty to obtain the sort of work upon which I was told on all hands it was best to begin. I do not mean to say I have made a bad spec by coming here, it would be much too soon for that even if I had been crumped out of every shop I showed my nose in, which I have not by any means, for I have met with more disinterested and sincere advice, and have received more good-natured boosting in this country in an hour than I found in the old country in a month. What I mean is, that it seems rather harder, or at least quite as hard, to get work of any sort, as a fitter, engine driver, or anything else *at once*. I was told that for a sensible chap who would begin small, there was lots of work to be had for the asking; in fact, that there was a demand for what I may call professional labour, but that is a great mistake. The works here, of every sort, are just as slack as they are anywhere else, rather worse perhaps. I went to the Grand Trunk and also the Canadian Pacific, but there was not the remotest chance; they are cutting down everywhere, sacking men, clerks, and draughtsmen hand-over-fist. The bosses were all good-natured, and sometimes spoke to their subordinates themselves, to see, as they said, if there was, or soon would, be, any vacancy, but there was not; and in the face of any number of their old hands waiting to be taken on again, there was small chance for a new comer. Of course both the Grand Trunk and the Canadian Pacific Railways have been running for some time, and are nearly finished, so it is not likely that they will be increasing their staff. The chances lie in the new companies that will probably form, and in

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the new works that will probably be opened, but this is a matter of waiting, not always convenient. There is small doubt, I think, that by waiting and worrying, some of these chances might be laid hold of, and that properly used they might be turned to good account, for there must certainly be lots to be done eventually, unless nine-tenths of the country are going to stand still and remain undeveloped; but this is not exactly what I expected. I thought that if a man represented himself as an engineer, and said that he would go and work as a navvy, fitter, or blacksmith, until the company found it would be better worth their while to employ him higher up the ladder, he was pretty certain of getting his request granted; but they say here that is not so, they are not particularly in want of gentlemen of any of the above persuasions anywhere about their line, and it won't pay them to keep two men where they need keep but one. Thus, the main point of difference between the two countries seems to me to be that, here work is more or less on the increase, though to nothing like the extent represented at home, and in England it is on the decline. Even that is not quite right, for work here at present is certainly getting slacker every day. There has been a great boom on Canada lately as a field for labour, thousands and thousands of people have come, and been sent out by Colonization Societies, etc., and the consequence is, there are more people already than there is work for, even in the agricultural line. Winnipeg, the much talked of Capital of the West, is simply dilapidating, and as far west as Regina living is high and wages low. I was told in friendliness, by a chap called Deacon (I was introduced to him by his father-in-law), who has an enormous tract of land by league with the Government, and to whose interest it will be to colonize it as soon as possible, that living in the latter place cost about \$10 a week, just double what we are paying here; and that he could get plenty of men glad to do any work for him at \$15 a month and their keep. All the towns down the line are the same, every place (so I am told) is, so to speak, staggered by the great and sudden influx of emigrants. Of course, by those who have money enough to start a farm and have sufficient experience to start it upon, there is always a comfortable living to be made, so long as there is a good export market for grain; but there is as much difficulty with the experience question as with the financial, for the ordinary run of emigrants, owing to the difficulty of getting on to a farm. These difficulties, I believe, will continue until there is a cry in the opposite direction, and Canada is voted a hoax. When people cease to flock out here, because they are told they can earn \$40 a month, with their board, and when those who have already arrived get shaken down into their places which will be opened for them by the natural increase in the number of farms every year, the country will soon revive, and with it the demand. When the people in England and elsewhere having got Canada off the brain, it will not be overflowed with people who come out to make fortunes, and at the end of six months only wish they could make tracks.

I have not written all this by way of complaint, or because I think our own prospects look black, for they don't; thanks to some powerful friends and good introductions. I think we are both pretty sure of profitable work for the winter, which, of course, means also after the winter; but, because my first impressions of the country are different from what I expected them to be, and I wished for the sake of afterwards comparing them with later experiences to put them on record, and I put them in the form of a letter to you, because, being a thinker on such Subjects, you may like to grin and note how my surprises are what you would have expected. I don't know what the people at home thought of my first letter; it must have dispelled some illusions concerning the voyage out, which they seemed to have thought we should like immensely, but we didn't, except at the beginning and the end. The first letter we had from the Governor said, I suppose by this time you are just about losing sight of the Irish coast, and beginning to meet the long swell of the Atlantic, and wishing your voyage was to last forty days instead of ten. Such a wish was far from my thoughts, and the dickens a bit of the Irish coast we ever lost sight of, for we never saw it, passing it in the dark and in thick weather, and, at the time we ought to have been losing sight of it, we were tumbling about at the instigation of a nor'-wester of moderate proportions; and we never felt the delights of a long swell at all, the wind, blowing fairly hard the whole time, shifted regularly every day from nor'-west in the morning to west and sou'-west at night, and kept us jumping about like a pea on a hot plate the whole time, which, with soaking decks and cold weather, made it imperative to go below occasionally to get warmed, dried, fed, and sea-sick sometimes, when the weather and the st ks were worst. It was a good week before it occurred to me that I might be able to get a light for my pipe under the lee of the hurricane deck, especially if I borrowed a fusee for the purpose. However, I was sorry when the run was over after all, and I had to commence knocking about from pillar to post on shore. I am sure I must have walked from twelve to fifteen miles to-day in job hunting alone, having made six business applications at long distances apart. It has been upon

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one occasion exactly the same as with the Indian business. If you remember, they said, had he been a civil engineer we could have sent him out at once; and I called on a chap here, a C.E., called Bantry, who asked me if I knew anything about surveying; I said I did, rejoicing inwardly at the vagueness of the question, but he soon stopped generalizing, and asked had I ever done any practical surveying in fact, could I take charge of a survey—staff, to go out west or elsewhere. I said I felt certain I could do so, but to his direct question was obliged to admit that I had never had any experience. He seemed sorry; he wanted someone to take charge of a survey, but he said he could hardly employ me for that purpose, seeing I had had no practice. I think, had I possessed a theodolite, and all the other paraphernalia, I could have got him to take me on trial, but of course it was no use spending a lot of money on instruments that I might never want, just for the chance. This is the only time I have come near getting a job yet. It was riling to miss it, but I don't see how it could have been otherwise. What would you have done? I am rather at a loss to know what to do now. I seem to have pretty well dried up Montreal, and don't see much use sticking here for another week, and yet the man whom I have got to see at 9 a.m. to-morrow, may recommend me to half-a-dozen different places, and those again may give rise to another half-a-dozen. What's the use of writing it all down any way? I am sitting on a very low chair at a very high table, consequently my left arm feels as though it was restraining an apparent tendency on the part of the table to set at nought the established laws of gravity. How is the old Tadpole, the wily banker, the impecunious toiler among heaps of gold? Tell him to prig a few thousand pound notes, and wrap himself up in them all but his head, that will do for the port light, and labelled wrong side up, with care, and get himself sent across here, then I shall have nothing to do but to chaw baccy, and wait till he comes out of jail. Have you seen my particular friend the Dook" lately? How's he a-getting on? And what's he doing? And what does he want to do? which is just the difference between great expectations and little realities. By-the-bye, did you ever hear of a single ladder bucket dredger for a depth of thirty-five feet to dredge 1,200 tons an hour? The buckets are 1 cwt. 7st. capacity, and travel up at the rate of 125 feet per minute; the engines are vertical, and the connecting rods go slick on to the pinions, on which is the friction arrangement, instead of on the spur wheel. I got an introduction to some people in the Harbour Commisioners, and the above details are all I got out of them.

Now, good-bye old chap, and good-bye to the port-light too. Don't bother to answer this, unless you have got something to say: you are sure to be busy, and I generally have my evenings pretty much to myself.

Your loving brother, J. SETON COCKBURN.

P.S. I meant to post this in time for the English Mail on Saturday, but found, on coming here, that the post is Thursday. We are now at Eton Corner, where Henry has at last come to an anchor. Of course, I had come down with him to see the chap, and make the financial arrangements. I can't tell you anything about them yet, as we found the chap in question had been suddenly called away, and would not be back till to-night. Hardy is his name. (I've found some ink). We went out to the farm this morning. It is said to be a very good one, and the fellow is worth a good deal of money. I expect I'll have time to tell you what arrangements I have made before I mail this. Henry was delighted with the place, and was not at all disconcerted by what they told him he would have to do. I think he will get on well. There is no doubt that he understands clearly what is expected of him, and that he means to do it.

[Extra Supplement.]

Sherbrooke, Monday. Many thanks for your letter, which I have just received; I also got one from Frank, and one from mother this morning when I arrived here. I have just settled Henry's business, and left him to his own resources at the farm. His address is, c/o W. Hardy, Eton Corner, P.Q. Your letter and those from home were almost the first reminders I had about my birthday. I just remembered, about an hour before I got them that it was past and over. You see I, in a manner, anticipated your wishes about letting you know what I think of the country, though, on reading it over, I don't really know whether I have talked a lot of rubbish or not. I have given you a lot of semi-political cant, when what you want to know is simply, how easy is it to make coin out here. Well, I think the answer to that is pretty easy. If a man is not ambitious, and would be content to be a common or garden farmer

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for the greater part of his life, and have, say a \$1000 a year to settle down on when he gets old, why let him ask some to give him some land and begin. Everyone says it's the jolliest life going, but then everyone is a farmer, so their opinion is no more than consistent. That is just about the state of the case at present. If a man is ordinarily careful in the choice of his land and the situation thereof, he has the best possible chance of making a comfortable living, and if he has got an agricultural soul his life will probably be a happy one. Concerning the preparatory training necessary before buying a farm, I should say there was some bosh written on the subject. Mind, I am only talking, I'm not giving deeply-studied opinions, or anything of that sort. I know too precious little about it. I've seen it stated constantly in books and newspapers, that *anybody* can easily get ten dollars a month, and their keep to begin upon. I say emphatically anybody can't. Henry is to get nothing at all to start with, bar of course his board and lodgings, etc. I don't say that I couldn't have done better for him, but I don't think I could, not without spending a lot of money in travelling about, and I made up my mind long ago to take the first thing that offered both for him and for myself. I have sent a short description of the people with whom he will have to live, etc., to mother, and he will, no doubt, send a full account of his commencement and first impressions. Just to give you an idea of the eagerness with which he commenced his work, I may tell you that he would not come down to the station this morning to see me off, because there was too much to be done. He had offered to churn the butter for Mrs. Hardy, and the boss had to go to a committee meeting of the annual fair, etc., etc. Well, it's a good sign. I gave him all the tips I could think of, and all the advice, and I believe he has begun his work with the firm resolve of making himself valuable to old Hardy. Now I'm going to shut up, as I've got to write to mother. Tell the old Coke I will write him a jaw sometime. Much obliged to him for his letter.

J. SETON COCKBURN.

60, Aylmer Street, Montreal,

Wednesday, 17th Sept., '84.

My Dear Mother,

I must follow your example and write when there is nothing much that can be said, not so much because there is nothing to say, as because I have'nt time to say it. I suppose you have got our first letters by this time. I wonder what sort of impression they made? I don't remember what I put inside my own, except that I confessed to being sea-sick, but it was due to the inks in the cabin. One thing, though, I did not tell you, namely, that when the time came I was sorry to land, for towards the end I enjoyed it very much. My hat arrived here with only a few dents in it. By-the-bye, talking of things that arrived here, I don't know if either of us told you the parcel and all your letters had come safe to hand (Thursday.) Here we are suddenly in Sherbrooke again. Awful nuisance this cutting about, but it can't be helped. It was no use Henry staying longer in Montreal; its resources for him were fairly exhausted; and now is the time for another shot at old Crabtree. We only arrived here this evening, being obliged, by the inconvenient times at which the trains run, to travel in the daytime. I shall have a lot to do to-morrow, but, if possible, I will add something hereto before I mail it. You will have to excuse bad writing, as it's a fearful bad light, and not very early. I meant to read your letter over again, and answer it as I went, but that will have to slide for the present. I have seen dozens and dozens of people in Montreal lately, and some good friends are also agitating there for me while I am away. I am going to see Colonel Ibbotson to-morrow, and he is going to try and get me in the Government Surveying business at Ottawa, so I may have to go there very soon. I have left my card and address with half the engineers in Canada, and all have promised to make enquiries for me, and let me know if anything turns up. I have'nt entered into minute details of what I have been doing, which people I have seen, and what they have told me, etc., because I would much sooner wait till I can write and tell you what has turned up. You'd be thinking all sorts of direful things if I were to write by one mail and say I was going to see the great so-and-so to-morrow, and tell you how I had backed myself up with an array of mutual friends, letters of introduction, etc., and then write by next mail to say that it had all come to nothing; and yet that is what is constantly happening; it must happen; of course I fortify my position as much as possible for every application,

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but if a man has'nt got a vacancy you can't expect him to make one. I have got eight or ten irons in the fire here or in Montreal, and each of them will probably generate other irons, frequently bigger and stronger than they are themselves.

By-the-bye, I don't know if I told you on the other side of this page (that is the other one), that I had blued 50c. to go and have a look at Lachine Rapids. I don't know whether I was disappointed or not. I think the boats that go down are far too big; one does'nt get a proper idea of the height of the waves and general *ruction* of the water. The steering was the best part of it. The water runs down I should say in places at about twelve to fifteen miles an hour, and the channel is sometimes not more than twenty or thirty yards wide between the rocks, which I could'nt see till we were alongside of them; and it twists and turns about a good deal. Altogether I did not grudge the money. I must shut up now mother dear, for to-night. You ought to have a capital M at least, seeing you are such a capital Mother, but my eyes are sore, so we'll let it slide. Perhaps I shall have to sign my name in pencil, if so you'll know I had'nt time to write any more.

Well, this arn't in pencil, and it arn't my name, it's ink, and such ink! I believe it's made from charcoal. Everything here is made of wood, even to the fire-irons and hearthstones. We are not where we was. Different portions of this letter have been inscribed in different places (small chance of your being able to read it if it had not). It was begun in Montreal, continued in Sherbrooke, and I am now writing at the Eastern Township Hotel, Eton Corner, near Birchton, P.Q., which I have every reason to believe will be Henry's field of action. I may hereafter be able to add for certain that he is settled, and upon what terms. All I can say at present is that a certain farmer named Hardy has consented to take him. I have not seen the man yet, he was called away suddenly on some important business and could not let me know in time to stop rife coming here to see him. I am told it's a first-rate farm and the man is well off, which is security against Henry suddenly being discharged owing to impecuniosity on the farmer's part, a thing which seems to be of pretty frequent occurrence about here, or, in fact, anywhere else. We went out to the farm this morning, and saw the man's father, who lives with him; he is a very decent old chap, but he is going away on Sunday for some time. Henry liked the look of the place very much indeed. It is about sixteen miles from Sherbrooke, and four-and-a-half from the station (Birchton). The country is a good deal wilder than any we have seen yet, though very pretty, nothing but wood all round, mostly pine, but not large timber. The village is also a pretty little place, it looks like a few houses all wood built in a field, with a road running through the middle of them, a road that would be considered a disgrace to any county in England, but which passes for a very fair one here. By-the-bye, jack-boots are such an evident necessity here that I advised Henry to get another pair before he left Sherbrooke, which he did for \$2 25c., or about nine shillings. Boots of every sort are much cheaper here, though the boot-maker himself said they were not so good; still they look to me to have a great deal of hard wear in them, and there is a wonderful difference in the price. I don't think Henry could have done without another pair, as they are by a long way the safest and best things to wear in the winter. (Sunday morning.) I have'nt been to church this morning, because it's three-and-a-half or four miles away, and the roads (owing to heavy rains yesterday and last night) are a mass of mud, and I have nothing but thin shoes. You see I came down from Montreal expecting to be back again on Saturday morning, and I can't get back now before Tuesday morning. I saw Hardy last night, and slept at his farm with Henry. I think on the whole he is well placed, for placed he certainly is. I made up my mind long ago to close with the first chance that offered for him unless there was some good moral or political reason against doing so. I can't see the shadow of such a reason in this case. Hardy is a middle-aged, intelligent-looking man, fairly cultured and educated, free and easy in his manners, as everyone is here. From what I hear, I should say he was inclined to be a little quick tempered, not a lot, not what you would call a hot-tempered man by any means. I think it would take a great deal to make him angry, but when he did become so, it would be a flare up and out again like a bunch of tow. He seems a genial sort of chap too, as he always says the best he can of everybody, and is always ready for a laugh. He has the reputation of being fair and upright in his dealings. When I talked to him about wages he said he certainly could'nt give Henry anything to start with during the time that is left for outside work before the winter; he would require too much explanation, and be too raw at his work to be of any value beyond his keep, and during the cold weather there was practically nothing to do but cut wood and attend the cattle. I find that even a skilled hand can seldom get more than \$10 a month with his keep at winter work *unless he engages for one or more years*. I think it's quite fair,

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when you consider that he has engaged Henry just when there is very little to be done, and he has no security that he (Henry) won't leave him when the spring comes, or perhaps before it. Of course, he probably won't do so, but you can't expect the man to count upon that. Thus the *probability* is that Henry will get only his board and lodging during the greater part of the winter; or, to use the man's own words, I'll do the best I can; if I find he's worth more I'll give it him, anyway he's sure of something in the spring. I like the farmer's wife very much, she must have been very pretty once, though of course, most of it has worn off now. She is very quiet, and very good tempered looking, and I think she will take a fancy to Henry. They have got one child, a girl of about eight or nine, who it will probably be Henry's duty to drive in school every morning. I think this settles the family. Henry will no doubt give you a lengthy description of the house, so I will refrain from expatiating on its merits. He will have a room to himself, which, in my opinion, is sufficient reason for clinching the bargain. You were wanting to know about the prices of things here as compared with the old country, as I have already begun to call it. Some son-of-a-gun has been playing the fool with my pen, and all the ink this place can raise is a concentrated solution in the bottom of a stone bottle. Well, I think I have told you all that I know at present, though I can't be sure. You see I have to write at odd times, and in odd places, and so I very often forget what I have said or have not said. Railway travelling is certainly dearer for short distances, but undoubtedly cheaper for long ones; that is, the tickets are issued at a reduced mileage, but it does not seem cheaper, and if time is money it is certainly not so. I don't know anything about a three or four day's journey. The return fare from Montreal to Sherbrooke, 102 miles, first-class, is \$5 60c. It is impossible for anyone but a hardened smoker, and one who can throw comfort to the winds, to travel anything but first-class, at least, that is the result of my experience so far. I don't know enough about it to give any reliable opinion on the merits of Canadian Railways at present. The clothing required in towns seems decidedly dearer than it is in England. What may be called the specialities of the country, such as overall working suits, jack-boots, etc., are cheaper. I can't say anything about living yet, \$5 50c. clears all shoals, washing included, in Montreal, and 6 or 7 would do the same in most country hotels, though I am not sure that they are hotels which you could go to. I have just remembered that last Friday was my birthday. How old am I twenty-four or twenty-five? Just tell me next time you write, for I really don't know. I think it must be twenty-four. I can't be a quarter of a century old yet, surely.

What early birds the people are here. It is just half-past nine and all lights have been out for some time, and everyone in the hotel is asleep. I've got to catch the train pretty early to-morrow, so I'll e'en do likewise. I'll only put J. S. C. here as I'm sure to have something more to say when I get to Montreal.

Sherbrooke, Monday. Have just received your letters. These were waiting for me here; also one from Frank. Many thanks for the lot. They were very nearly the first reminders I had about my birthday, but I just managed to remember it the night before I got them. Well, Mother, I am very sorry to hear that you are anxious about us, though I suppose you can't help it. I told you not to be before I went away, but I knew you'd go and do it again as soon as my back was turned. There's precious little to be anxious about I can tell you. Henry is fixed and settled, and I am in a very fair way to be so. That doesn't mean that I *hope* I shall be settled soon. More than that. I am beginning to arrive at more definite results as to my enquiries, etc. Then as to our being sick or in sorrow, you may also make yourself as comfortable as circumstances will permit; neither of us, I think, were ever in better health or more in earnest in the business of life. And concerning the blues or sorrow contingency, why I never whistled so long or so loud before. That's because there are not so many people to talk to, and none that object to music. There's no girls either to talk to. We don't know a single one in the country. Hard luck, isn't it? Now, about the weather cheerful subject (it's raining like mad). So far it has displayed just as much inconstancy as is usually met with in England. The first night we spent here was cold, the next day was hot, and the next day hotter still, and then it remained so for about a fortnight. Now it has cooled down again, and is pretty changeable. It seems to me so far the main difference between this climate and the English one is the difference between the mean temperatures of summer and winter. In Devonshire I should say the average mean difference between summer and winter is about 40°, and in Sherbrooke it's probably more like 100°. In both countries sudden changes and rises or falls are common. In this country it will fall from, in summer, say from 90° to 60°, and in England it will fall from 70° to 40°. It therefore stands to reason that this climate must be the most healthy, if people do not mind the heat, for anybody, no matter how thinly clothed, can always, with a little exercise, keep themselves

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healthily warm with the thermometer at 60°, but it is by no means always easy to prevent getting cold when it falls suddenly as low as 40°. In winter, I am told, it will frequently fall from 0° to 40° below; but then the winter here is such a recognised institution that everyone is prepared for such freaks. The healthy appearance of the kids in the country round about here would make you feel pretty happy about the Grub, I think. I have seen some half his age who would make three of him at least.

I should like to know what is inside the castles that you build in connection with my nice acquaintance of the steamer. We didn't make any friends who asked us to stay with them, or anything of that sort. The number of saloon passengers was very limited, and those from whom I would have accepted invitations were more limited still. Dr. Marsh, the only one who took the trouble to help or advise us at all when we got on shore, and who is a very nice chap, gave us his address, and made us promise to hunt him up if ever we came out west, and told us if we wanted to know anything about that part of the country to write to him, and he would make all the enquiries, etc., in his power; which I shall certainly do towards next spring. It's no good writing now; the correspondence would die out and leave nothing definitely settled behind it. Now I think I'm finished up with Sherbrooke. I leave for Montreal to-night, by the 1.35 train. I hope there may be half-a-dozen appointments waiting for me. I have told you elsewhere why I do not write detailed accounts of the people I have seen or have yet to see, the chances of securing such-and-such a job, etc., etc. I have neither the time nor the ability to give you a clear and concise idea of the value and weight of each introduction, and to what it may probably lead. Besides, if I did, you would naturally want to know how each of them had ended, and I should have to send by each mail a long list of places where I had NOT got work a glum kind of letter for both sides. Suffice it that my prospects are good, and that all my friends express their unqualified approbation of the courses I have adopted to attain my ends. *Montreal, old address*. There is nothing much that I can add. I did not travel last night because the trains had been changed, and I should have had to wait two or three hours at a wretched little hole in the small hours of the morning. I therefore slept the night in Sherbrooke, and got here by a train arriving at noon. Having fed and got my baggage stowed away, I hunted up my two principal backers, at least I hunted for them but was unsuccessful, so I can't tell you anything about what's been done for me during my absence. I believe I've got rather more baggage than Henry. When we split it up it was found that I needed both portmanteaus and the Canadian box as well, that I now have a fearful lot of packages to lug about, including my gun and rifle. The rifle reminds me of old Daddy. How's he getting on? Making big strides, I hope? He'll need all he can make when I come to see him. I seem to be always ready for a guzzle now. I wish you could have had the journey I did this morning; I am sure you would have enjoyed it, though the train had suddenly developed amphibious proclivities whilst going over a bridge. What one hears of the autumn tints here is rather the reverse of exaggerated. Nearly the whole way from Sherbrooke to Montreal is through woods, and they are all a blaze of red in every shade, from the brightest fieriest crimson to a dark purple, that is, all except those which are green or yellow. The mixture is much prettier than all one colour would be, and by contrast with the dark scraggy-looking pines, it does not look the least gaudy. Well, I'm going to shut up and do some reading. So good bye for the present, and best love to everyone under the sun when it shines in Dawlish.

Your loving Son, J. SETON COCKBURN.

Mailed Friday, 27th.

Ottawa,

October 2nd, 1884.

My Dear Mother,

I can't lose this mail after having taken so long about my last letter. But it will scarcely be more than How d'you do? How are you? I'm all right! Well, that's better than nothing, anyhow. I have, as you see, again changed my

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location, whether advantageously or otherwise I cannot as yet say. But this Capital of Canada is a miserable little place. The railway station is very little better than a shed in a field, and the road from there to the town oh, golly! a train off the rails is nothing to it. I came up in the hotel 'bus, and though I tried all I knew to sit firm and not let daylight be seen betwixt me and my saddle, I was jumped about like a dancing-master, and I hammered those cushions till I thought of claiming a week's pay from the hotel for beating the dust out of them. However, I didn't; so I am still here. There is one good thing I have done in coming here, I have reached the head and source of the immigration question. I can get an unprejudiced opinion as to the very best spots in the place that is, settling spots and also various items of information which all tend, more or less, to the endorsement of this moral: Let no professional men, of any sort, come out here. I used to think there must be lots of openings for engineers, doctors, etc., in the small towns that were almost daily springing up along the line, but that is not so. Of course there is now and then a chance, say for a doctor to start in some place where eighty or a hundred people have congregated together, and if he can live on his own pills till another couple of oughts are added to the figure, he may get a good practice. But then he may not, because somebody else may get it instead. The fact of the matter is, and I have high government officials for my authority, that, owing to the educational mania, which is every whit as rampant here as it is in England, this country produces annually a number of professional men, of every class, far in excess of the demand. The illiterate settler makes his money pretty easy, and then, being impressed with the free country rubbish that is talked here, he decides that his sons shall not be farm labourers, they shall be gentlemen. Why the blazes shouldn't 'Bob' be just as good a doctor or lawyer as anyone else? So to school and to college they go, and having been made gentlemen of, they lounge about the towns, filling the bars and the billiard-rooms, and smoking themselves green while waiting for a breeze. Why, in this wretched little place, of about 20 to 25,000 inhabitants, there are thirty lawyers and twenty-five doctors in the directory, and all these have one or more satellites. Well, this is all very dry.

The weather is getting colder every day, and the shop windows are getting full of snow-shoes, mocassins, etc. I hear very different stories about the winter. Some people say it is so cold that the rain freezes into icicles as it comes down from the clouds, and so forms pillars which you can climb up and skate about overhead. And others say it's so jolly mild in the coldest weather that you've only got to put a little snow in the fire and it will soon melt.

I must shut up now, as I've got an appointment to meet the Minister of the Interior and several other swagger gentlemen.

Best love to everybody. Remember me all round.

Your loving Son, J. SETON COCKBURN.

P.S. I open this again to tell you that I am fixed here, for the present at anyrate. I have got a job in a patent solicitor's office, as draughtsman. Salary is scarcely fixed yet, but will probably be seven or eight dollars a-week to begin upon, increasing to about twelve. It may be permanent or it may not, but I have something else to fall back upon.

Address 202, Bank Street, Ottawa.

The job I have to fall back upon is with a blacksmith, at Eton Corner. I should at first get only board, but probably more afterwards.

Ottawa,

October 6th, '84.

My Dear Frunck,

Ottawa,

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I have no doubt you think me a blackguard, to put it mildly, for taking such a month of Sundays to answer your letter; Of course I thought to myself as soon as I had finished it: Dash it! here goes. I'll write him a jaw. But dash it here didn't go. I wrote to mother instead, and when I had finished that one I was so tired of scribbling that I smucked a cigar and turned in. I was then staying for the night at the Sherbrooke Hotel, on my way to Montreal, after having stuck Henry in the mud, which is the polite way of saying that I left him rapidly taking root in the soil of the new country. I haven't heard from him since we parted, partly, I have no doubt, because I have been knocking about so much that all my letters have missed me. In fact, I haven't heard from a soul for more than a fortnight. However, I am stationary at last, for a time anyway. I have got a job as senior draughtsman in a patent solicitor's office (don't tell anybody, but my only junior is a boy with a face more astute in angles than in expression). It is a rum sort of work that I have to do mostly making drawings from models in perspective; not too easy, especially as the drawings have to be finished off up to Dick, or they are not accepted at the Patent Office. But there's not much in it after all. No designing, no calculations, and in a great many instances no real scale even. In fact, so long as the drawing is done quickly and immaculately got up, it does not matter a rap whether a man is as big as a monkey or not, so long as they are both good-looking. You see the main object is to make the principle of the invention clear at a glance in one view, that is why they generally are perspective. I have only been at it a day and a half, so I can't tell you much about either the boss or the work yet, but I think we shall get on very well together. Hartley is his name, and this much is tolerably certain concerning him, he is a rising man, his business is increasing, and, as I said before, I am his senior draughtsman, therefore should he hum, I shall endeavour to hum too. Tell old Major that I can whistle as loud and as long as I like, and that I can smoke all day if I please. But I don't please; that's just the rummy part of it. Now in Hawk's shanty they don't like whistling, and for the life of me I couldn't keep quiet there. Also they object to the fumes of tobacco, therefore they missed many a half hour of my time, which was spent in sacrificing to the king of weeds. Here, in a free country, I can do as I please, and yet, for some reason or another, I don't do it. The office is on the fourth flat of the Victoria Chambers good height up you see. My lamp is going out must shut up for to-night.... Well,

I've just come down again from up a height, as they say in your part of the world. I finished my first drawing to-day, was highly commended, and gave it my junior to trace. My second job is a patent saw-sharpening affair for circular saws. They want half-a-dozen different plane views, and a perspective arrangement, to be worked up from a few rough tracings, a rougher specification, and a photograph with a man in it the patentee, I believe so if I flatter him in the matter of unlikeness he is bound to be well pleased. I don't know yet, though, if he has to go in or not. The Patent Office is bound to keep a record, in pictures or models, of the results of mens' brains, whether eccentric or otherwise, but not of the general appearance of their possessors. More's the pity, I think; for from what I have seen of the models in the Patent Office, they would furnish specimens for the phrenological study of mental imbecility for generations to come. I only had time just to run through the model rooms, but here is the idea of a patent which tickled me immensely. It was simply a lot of wooden geese fastened at the end of long sticks all over and around a boat. They were grouped together in most picturesque confusion, some standing on their heads and some on their tails, and some, *I believe*, supposed to be flying. The idea was that when real live geese saw this affair like a mad Noah's ark on the water, they would recognise their brethren and come flocking along to be shot by the other goose inside with the gun. Perhaps being geese they would do just that, but then what depravity on the part of the warlike one thus to take advantage of the eccentricities of his fellows. I have never seen the affair used. It does not seem to have made great progress in the good opinion of the public. Perhaps, after all, the bloodthirsty quacker, who offers to the irreverant eye this melancholy evidence of insanity, had a cynically low opinion of his kind, causing him to believe that geese were geese enough to be deceived by him, the greatest goose of the lot. I must shut up, or I shall do something flighty. I wish you'd come and punch my head, or do something of that sort. Here have I been working all day, and now I'm writing all night, or at least I've just written it. There's a fellow here feels like punching somebody, but you see he's all alone, and he knows how I might hurt himself. Besides, he's writing to my dear brother, so he does not want to stop me, or else you know he'd never get the letter. You understand, don't you? Of course you do. It's as clear as mud. I'm writing with somebody else's ink, that's all. Between you and me (there's plenty of room, old boy; chuck your elbows out, and sp t where you please), that's why he writes such rubbish. I'm going to write now. You'll see the difference at once when I begin. The room I now occupy as I pen these lines, belongs to the ancient style of architecture known

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as the Five-dollar Boarding-house Rectangular (he can't afford to go on writing like that, it's too expensive). Excuse me, my dear sir, I must crave your permission to condense slightly the style of my caligraphy. Her Majesty's Postmaster has a prejudice against the carrying of letters which exceed one ton in weight. I was, I believe, describing the beauties of my apartment. To proceed at once to details, there is a stove-pipe that comes in at the wall and goes out at the ceiling, a peculiarity by no means uncommon in edifices of the before-mentioned class the object of the design being the economical warming of the whole structure by means of one stove, generally of the severely-dilapidated style. There is also, on the opposite side of the room, an antique sofa, celebrated for having been too forcibly sat upon, probably by some athletic hero on his return from victory. However that may be, the sofa remains to this day tabooed to mortal forms, though the present owner has informed me that It reely is goin' to be fixed up all noo like, when I gets a few more boarders. From the mixed dialect observable in the form of which intimation I gather that the original language of the aborigines is not altogether lost to their posterity. There are also various other specimens of that style of furniture, which is generally admitted to be contemporary with the peculiar type of architecture of which I write, but I am debarred by lack of space from giving them a full description, or mentioning the legends connected with each. The beautifully-carved cornices, of the sheep-skin and bees'-wax order, the elaborate mural . Oh, gammon! Many happy returns of the twenty-sixth of last month to you, old boy. I quite forgot my own birthday, so it could hardly be expected that I should remember yours. People often do what they're not expected to, however, and I did remember your birthday after it was all over that is to say. I remembered that yours was on the twenty-sixth by talking to somebody about something or other that was going to happen somewhere about that date, and then of course it came into my head that I had passed mine over without observing the feast. Pot said in a letter he wrote to me, that he hoped my birthday might be the day on which I should hear of some good job, or do something which should turn out to be a stroke of good fortune. Curiously enough, it was on the nineteenth that I learned that a good opening had occurred for Henry, and that if I liked to take a rather rough fanning job, I could get myself stuck likewise. That part of the offer I did not accept, and I think by what has since happened, that my refusal was judgematical. Moreover, the very next day I heard of a more congenial matter in the hammer-and-tongs department of my august profession. A village blacksmith, a horny-handed son of toil, generously offered to feed and lodge me for as long as I liked to stop, in return for my services in his forge. The offer was the more magnanimous in that he was not in any particular need of assistance, but was willing to stretch a point (a proceeding that would stump Professor Euclid, by the way,) considering that I was in particular need of a job. No doubt, like all Yankees, he had an eye on the dollars' question, and argued, with most praiseworthy perception, that being an engineer and one who by his own representation had seen a good deal of forge work, I might prove a very lucrative spec. But then he promised that if he found that through my agency the money came in faster than it did before, he would give me my fair share of the profits so accruing. So I says to him says I, See here, stranger, if I don't get into a hole between now and this day fortnight, you'll see me again. So leave the door open, will you? He promised to do just that; and, in fact, he said that I could come and start right away whenever I pleased. So if this present exalted position of mine should fail me for, as I said before, it may only be a temporary affair why, slick I shall go away down to my particular friend the village blacksmith. Well, I must wind up; it's getting late. If ever you should be goaded by an uneasy conscience into writing me another letter, just let me know what is going on on the banks of the coally Tyne. Who is anybody, and where is he, etc. How is Bill Hawes, and give him my love for himself and family. Remember me especially to M. Moorshead, Esq. Tell him he missed a treat when I went away without standing him a drink; it was the bitter(less)est! day of his life. Is Edison still at the redoubtable No. 14? Reach your toe out and kick him if he is, and tell him I don't love him. By-the-bye, how's the canoe getting on? Is it finished? Has anybody been drowned? If so, how many? And did I owe them anything? There's no chance of its being the other way on. If you see any of the old club fellows knocking about, tell them they can expect a lock of my hair on receipt of P.O.O. for one dollar. In fact say boo to every goose you meet.

Your loving Brother, J. SETON COCKBURN.

Present Address: 202, Bank Street, Ottawa, P.O., Canada.

October 10th, '84.

My Dearest Mother,

I have only two hours from now till when the mail closes, so I must make the best of my time. I have not called upon Mrs. Howel, because I could not get at them. It was not worth while making a pretty long journey just to deliver one introduction, and I believe someone told me they were not in Montreal. By—the—bye, talking of people whom I did not see, I must tell you that I also missed Cousin Maynard. He had gone away somewhere, and left no address that I could hear of, either at the offices of the British Association or elsewhere. I was very sorry not to have seen him, but it could not be helped. You say that Henry told you I was seedy. I think he must have been suffering under the same delusion as he was that day he came home from a yachting cruise, and said that everybody had been awfully sea-sick, meaning that he himself had been the principal sufferer. I don't mean that he has been particularly seedy either, certainly nothing beyond an unmentionable ache. We were both a little bit churned up for a day or two, and I believe it was owing to ice-cream. In the hot weather it was most tempting, and they give you a great plateful for 10 cents., none of the rascally little thimblefulls you get in England for twice that amount. But you can make yourself perfectly easy, we are both so far as I know, perfectly well, not even a mentionable ache, and I tell you candidly, though I am afraid it is a dreadful confession, I have'nt felt wretched by any means since I left home. Poor old Daddy! I'm sorry he was bothered about such a trivial thing as a marriage settlement; perhaps it is that he wants twopence-halfpenny to square his accounts. Pump him, will you, and if it should be this that's preying on his mind, you may tell him he can draw on me for the amount, and I'll toss him double or quits when I come home. I suppose he's pretty nearly spliced by this time. Concerning the passage in my letter which seems to have puzzled you; it seems clear enough to me, naturally it would, but that don't count. To the best of my recollection I was writing from Aylmer Street, and I think I said as much in my letter, if so, here is the explanation of the obscurity. I think with the *prospect* of his (Henry's) being shortly settled *there* (Crabtree's), you might write, etc., if we are not *here* (the diggings) they can forward the letter. I can't see the muddiness if we are not here, means in other words if we should have gone away (of course it does), before your answer arrives, and they can forward the letter, means naturally that the people we have left behind can send after us. If I had meant Crabtree to forward the letter, I must have said if we are not *there*. Of course, if I did not tell you that I was writing from Aylmer Street, I was a great coon, and that would explain the need of explanation. Well, I suppose you know Henry's true and permanent address by this time, so his letters are all right. But what would have been the use of sending one to Crabtree, we should have been more likely to leave our address at our diggings any way, and there was only a *prospect* of his going to C.'s. Should his letter have gone there, however, he will no doubt get it in the end, though it will probably be a very long end. We didn't leave our address with him because he said he would let his friend Kemp (who introduced us) know what decision he arrived at, and he (Kemp) would write to us; for all we knew the old chap himself could'nt write his own name. Poor old fossil! If you send him a note you'll make him scratch all his hair off, and he has'nt got much. I would'nt send any of my letters to Mrs. Hall if I were you, you don't know how she is off for that, and it will take a power of thinking for any old lady unacquainted with Algebra to find out an unknown quantity. You might address them now to the Post Office, Ottawa, P.O. If I should go elsewhere I will leave instructions at the P.O. to forward my letters.

This is a truly dreadful scrawl, but never mind, quantity wins the day, quality nowhere. You see I am taking the subjects of your letter and answering them as I go along. So far from having had to dip into my money for Henry, I left him with fifty odd clear dollars in his pocket; this came from his second £10. He had pretty near come to the end of the ten he had in his belt when he started, when he got the job. I had already come to the end of mine extraordinary, was'nt it? and now I have got at this present moment \$459 75c.; quite a fortune, is'nt it? I'm sorry I have'nt time to write you a longer letter my dearest mamma, but those nasty wicked people at the Post Office said they would not stop that big ship for a day or two on any account. This is such a beast of a pen. I

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would put it in the envelope and send it to you if I did not think it would find its way out before it reached you, just to show you what an immoderate amount of patience I have got. I've tried to cross all these t's half-a-dozen times, and pretty vigorously too. It must be awful good paper to withstand the amount of friction necessary. Now I've pretty well filled up the sheet. That's all I've been trying to do lately as you can no doubt see.

With best love to all friends, relations, and acquaintances, believe me,

Ever your loving Son, J. SETON COCKBURN.

202, Bank Street, Ottawa,

October 15th, '84.

My Dearest Mother,

I have just received your letter, dated the wait a minute till I look the 17th Sept. Long while ago, isn't it? Do you remember what you wrote about? I never do; and it seems most extraordinary in reading your letters referring to ones I have written about a month ago, that though I know you are answering them, I don't understand what you are talking about the least in the world. I don't want to discourage you, you know. Your letters are rather enhanced in value by their riddle-like quotations. They make me wonder what on earth I can have been writing about. I do not even remember, unless you tell me, whether they were long or short; and, except for my consciousness of never having written in a strain of trifling or levity, or otherwise than in a manner calculated to elevate and improve the minds of everyone but my hearers, I should be almost led to think I had been guilty of excesses in the way of toast-water or gruel previous to writing them (tea-totaller you see). Put it to yourself now. Wouldn't you feel riled if somebody said, in a long commendatory sort of letter to yourself, that your description of so and so was very funny? or that somebody else laughed very much at your whole letter, when you felt certain that the letter in question must have been a well thought out essay on the subject. Did Socrates ever stand on his head? and if so, upon which end of him did it grow? Wouldn't it be matter for despair to feed his remorseless eye teeth upon, to find that the highest flights of your intellect were capable only of a jocular interpretation? But I feel certain there must be a mistake somewhere. As I said before, I am fortified with the comfortable assurance of the integrity of my heart in wishing to write only what will feed the hungry mind. By-the-bye, if Socrates ever did stand on the upside down end, he had excellent authority in justification of his action, for Pot, the Patentee, has been known to do likewise. I've only had two pipes to-day, mother; or three, is it I forget; call it two. Justice, tempered with mercy, &c., which means that I'll have another now. That's the thing for ideas! Oh, certainly. Picture to yourself an editor writing like mad. He indulges in a pipe to soothe his rampant brain, and while lighting it he leans back for a complacent yawn. When he gets up again, his dominant idea is that the back of his chair must have been suffering from a diseased spine. Isn't that a striking picture? The earth hitting a poor man on the back of his head, eh? Well, it's quite a true one, and the incidents it portrays are also of recent occurrence. The weary editor represents me; the earth represents hooray a feather bed, which heroically interposes its devoted body between me and the belligerent planet. Every detail you can con (I don't know how to spell conjure) up will represent the scene true to the life in everything save the attitude and gestures of the falling literary warrior. Nothing you could imagine would adequately portray the elegance the dignity of my descent. Daddy was, I believe, the fortunate witness of my native grace of movement under similar trying circumstances. I allude to an incident which occurred during a small festive gathering held in our Denmark Street domain, on the occasion of his last visit to Gateshead. None of the furniture, I am happy to say, suffered very severely during the encounter. The table, under which my booted feet were disposed happened somehow to have a rather violent oscillation imparted to it, disarranging direfully what was already in direful disarray. The lamp, standing alone in the midst of confusion, suffered a partial eclipse; and my favourite Dublin meerschaum successfully resisted the dilapidating effect of a fall of several feet. So much for *tableaux vivants* in real life. Now I will just see if there is anything in your letter requiring an answer. First and foremost, I am very much obliged to the Miss Bruces for

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their kind message, to which please return them for answer a like message from me. As to Kemp I don't think you need be at all uneasy concerning him. Even supposing he had any foul plots with regard to either of us, he is done with now; but I am perfectly certain he conspired only to our benefit. It is due entirely to him that a place was found for Henry, while we were galivanting about in Montreal, and I firmly believe a good place too; better any way, as far as I can see, than old Crabtree, who was a baccy chewing old son of a sea-cook.

All I have ever heard against Hardy is that he is not a man to pay ten dollars for what is only worth five which means in point of fact that Henry will not get very big wages. Still he gets his keep and good keep too, as I can testify and will soon get something else besides; and meantime he is in a clean house, among a fairly civilized and certainly good-natured set of people, and with a very comfortable room to himself. When he is two or three years older, he will be able to see his own interests clearly, and to know his own worth, and then if he could benefit himself by a change, let him do so. Henry is at present very young for his years, and has a good many ways and ideas which time will moderate. On an old fossil like Crabtree these youthful vagaries would jar continually, that is, I think, they might; while on Hardy they had just the opposite effect. He seemed to be a good deal amused with Henry not at all satirically. He seemed to think he was rather good company, and his laugh is so peculiar that he has only to show an incipient inclination to grin, and Henry is ready to join him at once. I had a sort of message from him (Henry) to-day. Your letter was sent to Eton Corner, and Henry sent it on to me enclosed in a note, to the effect that he liked the work immensely, and would write on Sunday. Just received two more letters from you. I was awfully sorry to hear about poor Uncle James. My god-father, wasn't he? Poor fellow! He was always honour itself, and would spend his last dollar in paying a lawyer to give his property to somebody else if he thought it belonged to them, in moral justice. Well, I am very sorry to hear about it, and that's about all I can say. I never saw very much of him; but what I have seen was nothing but what was good generosity, kindness, honour, and a certain grim good-nature all his own.

I know I missed a mail in writing to you, but I could not help it. It was the time I went to Eton Corner with Henry, and not being at all aware of the posting difficulties connected with these out-of-the-way places, I found when I got there that it took almost as long for a letter to get from Eton Corner to Quebec as from Quebec half-way across the Atlantic. I was knocking about from pillar to post there, and I had to write when and where I could; but I will not miss-fire again if I can help it. Talking about missing fire reminds me that it's all gammon about not being allowed to carry cartridges or combustibles on board a steamer, or on board the Montreal any way. Nobody took the trouble to find out even if we had any infernal machines in our bags or not, and everybody carried matches ship's officers and all generally wax ones. From not being supplied with these necessaries, I was constantly having to cadge a light for my pipe from somebody else, for as I believe I told you I was not always too bad to smoke. In fact, I believe it was due to the sneaking way in which I knocked the ashes out of my Friday morning pipe, that I got seedy at all. You see well, never mind, we won't talk any more blarney in this letter, out of respect to the memory of poor Uncle James. I can't help remarking though, that you are just a wee peckle Irish in your lamentations concerning my remissness in writing. You say in a letter to me, 'There is no note from you this week, except one from Henry.' In view of what you say about the Howels and Audleys I think I shall write to them both. To Mrs. Howel, to explain why I didn't call when I was in Montreal, and to Mrs. Audley, to thank her for the introduction I never received; and besides, I may just as well let them know where I am. I don't think it costs Allen anything to forward my letters. They always come with only the English stamp on them, and his address scratched out and mine put on, generally with the word re-directed written above. It's only fair after all. You pay the Post Office to send the letters to where I am, not to where I was. I must shut up now. It's time to turn in, though I expect I'll have time to add something besides my signature before I mail this to-morrow. Friday night. I have only got a very little time before post, and only a very little to say. I don't know if I have fairly answered all the subjects in your letter that I wish to speak about, and I haven't time to read it over again. However, I suppose you get a letter pretty well every week by the time this comes to hand. The weather here is every bit as changeable as it ever was in Dawlish. Sometimes I have felt it decidedly chilly, even with my great-coat on; and at others it's warm enough to cruise about à la dook, without a great coat and all flying. 'The woods away over the other side of the river look something like the colour of an exaggerated orange. In fact, the country just now is pretty, to say the least of it. I don't think I have ever told you what this part of it is like, but I

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will reserve that subject for a future effort. By—the—bye, who won the tournament at Dawlish? You see I left just in the thick of it, so it naturally interests me, though of course it is quite an affair of the past with you. Did Ethel Beaumont win anything? Remember me to her as warmly as Charlie Wrottesley would permit, also to Mrs. B . . . By—the—bye again, I told Daddy I was going to send him a present. So I am. It's coming; but it has'nt gone yet. There is a difficulty concerning the packing for such a long postage journey. Don't be alarmed on the score of my extravagance there's no ground for it I assure you. I would tell you what the damage was; for I don't believe in keeping the cost of presents a secret. But the truth is, I don't exactly remember it. I think it was something over two, and under three, dollars, for the lot. The brooch is of course for Muriel, with my love. I suppose I may say that shan't scratch it out anyway. Why, I haven't told you what the brooch is. Time's short; but it's a pair of snow shoes, crossed with a little affair at the top. I got them because they are characteristic of the country they come from, and I knew you would like to see them both dressed alike, though of course there will be something else besides. Love to everybody,

Your loving Son, F. SETON COCKBURN.

202, Bank Street, Ottawa, P.O.

October 17th, '84.

Bold Old Daddy,

Mercurial Retailer of Caustic and Squills, Leaches and Rhubarb and Camomile Pills.

Take a run and jump at yourself, and see if you can't hit upon the answer to that riddle.

This small satire is intended to counteract any embarrassing amount of gratitude you may happen to feel for the small present I send herewith to charming Mrs. Lestock Cockburn, that is to be, or that is already, for aught I know to the contrary. The scarf—pin is for yourself; you have got a much better one I know, but not such a pretty one. I hesitated a long time whether to send it to you or to Frank; he having indulged in a birthday some time back, but I argued, with my customary logical powers, that birthdays were, as a rule, of more frequent occurrence in the life of man than weddings, and having fairly gotten the best of the controversy, my opponent being nowhere, I have acted up to my convictions in sending you a miniature pair of *snow*—shoes as a testimony of my *warm* affection. (Horrible, ain't it?) Well, never mind. How goes the money—grubbing business in your department. Good word that. I got it in my dealings with the Government of these parts. What do you think? A man had the cheek to—day to ask me if I wanted any money! me, who's got four hundred and fifty dollars somewhere, and fifty cents, in his pocket besides; think of that you old Camomile Pill, and hold a bucket to your mouth to catch the water. That man, Sir, was my esteemed employer, A. Hartley, Esquire, who solicits patents, and gets a good many of them too, and I told that man no, as became a gentleman of my own independent means, emphatically no. Ahem! not just at present. Ha, ha, says I to myself, says I, I laugh in my sleeve, this is my first week, and from being new to the work and out of practice anyway, I have'nt appeared to the best advantage. I'll wait till next week, and then it'll be a lot of money or two pistols, says I to myself says I (that's a quotation you know.) Besides, I hope to benefit myself by this temporary abstinence in other ways. A sharp, enterprising chap, who is pushing his way upwards to business distinction as Hartley is, is better satisfied to have at his back a fellow who is evidently not hard up! and may be worth something, than to have a seedy looking dependent who must be paid on Saturday or sleep on a doorstep. Of course, supposing both to possess the same ability, it induces a feeling of respect too, which in its turn brings it about, that in the event of anything going wrong in any way, the more fortunate gentleman is not blown up, until the why and the wherefore of the mishap has been ascertained, when it frequently transpires that he is not in the wrong; whereas the seedy dependent, who generally walks in reluctantly at 9 o'clock and goes out with the air of a dook at five ditto sharp, gets it pretty hot in any case, in the same way that a man will swear at a common pipe for breaking, but will swear at himself for

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breaking an expensive one. I believe that illustrates my theory somehow, but I forgot my original idea before I had got half through with the simile. However, the plain fact is easy enough of comprehension. I have gone in for impressing my boss with an idea of my importance. You see I closed with this gentleman on the clear understanding that the job would possibly be only a temporary one, but if I can only get him to perceive my manifold merits I shall be kept on through the winter, and somebody else will have to bunk, that is supposing anybody has to. Take it altogether I have made a very good beginning; Hartley talks to me more confidentially every day, and this evening told me I had done very well, which does not look as though he were going to be niggardly in the matter of screw, for that is not a settled point yet. I notice that my writing is nearly as variable as my ideas. You might think this had been written by two different people, or by one man in two different years instead of all at one sitting, bar the last few words, which are a Sunday production. It's all done by a turn of the wrist, something like the handle in a New York printing machine. How can I go on? A slavey, one pre-eminently of the boarding house description, is kicking up a row. I don't exactly know what sort of a row, unless . Yes, by jove, I have it, she's singing. I don't know whether Messrs. Moody and Sankey would be shocked at her for desecration of the Sabbath or praise her for singing one of their tunes. Probably they would split the difference and tell her she was a good girl, with a hint tacked on that a little went a long way. Well, this is a confounded lot of rubbish I've been writing, but I make it a point never to send an unfilled sheet across the Atlantic, and there is absolutely nothing to write about in all these places. You talk of Dawlish being a dead-and-alive hole, but it's a fool to Ottawa in this respect. It may be a go-ahead *country*, but the *towns* stand perfectly still. The prevailing sounds on Sunday afternoon are an occasional lumbering kind of tramp along the wooden pavements, the squalling of stray children, and the bark of stray dogs. Love to everybody (there's philanthropy for you).

Your loving Brother, J. SETON COCKBURN.

P.S. (Monday night). There is nothing more to say except that I always feel as reluctant to close a letter as to begin one.

J. S. C.

202, Bank Street, Ottawa,

October 22nd, '84.

My Dear Old Daddy,

You wrote to me under the expectation of getting a reply from me, so here you are. Before I proceed further, let me wish you joy, as I suppose you are married by this time. May God bless you both, and may your patients have all the faith in your skill as a doctor, and your honour as a man, that you deserve. I don't know whether to address to you at Hope Cottage or not, as nobody has told me exactly when you are to be married, or where you are going when you've been and gone and done it. Well, by Jove! I know you're a cautious sort of chap as regards the L.S.D., and that you generally seem to know about how much coin you ought to have, but if I had your incipient fortune, I would swear by my own ghost and set up a blacksmith's shop alongside the Houses of Parliament. I would call myself a dooke, nothing less. Why it's magnificent. You'll soon be sporting a donkey cart or a balloon to pay your morning calls in. I would'nt have horses on any account if I were you, they're vulgar, and then if you should have to ride anywhere you would make a much greater sensation on a high mettled donkey with half the attendant personal danger.

No time for more at present, old chap. Give my love to your wife, and believe me,

Your affectionate Brother, J. SETON COCKBURN.

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202, Bank Street, Ottawa,

October 22nd, '84.

Dear Mother,

As I am also writing to Daddy by this post, I am afraid you will not get a very long letter. There's a confiscated great buzz-fly knocking about, and I can't kill him. I told you in my last letter I would give you some idea of what Ottawa was like, but now the time has arrove for the ordeal, I don't like it; descriptions of scenery are not my forte, and they're always uninteresting both to write and to read. By-the-bye, before I begin, how's old Frank's ear, poor old chap, I suppose he growled away by himself, till it was found out by accident by some of you. I hope it will soon be all right again, and that he will be able to let me know how he is getting on at the Works, though three words will probably describe the state of affairs to perfection, same as usual. Still, I should like to know what Major says to him, and if he or any other members of that fossilized firm are beginning to wake up to a consciousness of his merits. You know, it's always been my idea, that they will find out that they have let the two best men they ever had slip through their fingers, namely, the two senior engineering members of this remarkable family, and that it will eventually occur to them that they had perhaps better hold on to the third. The fact of their giving him 22/-a week while they are sacking other men looks promising for my theory, and if only he can establish a claim to any particular qualification, he may yet succeed in drawing some sort of a prize, where I, and even Pot, have only succeeded in drawing blanks. I believe Frank does possess a special qualification, and that is a power of managing and organizing work. Drawing or designing, etc., is not his strong point, though he would often succeed in that, as the tortoise, where many a hare would fail; but give him an erecting job or anything of that sort, and he would so arrange that the work first wanted should be first ready. This does not sound very much to boast of, but it is a very useful knack to have. I certainly do not possess anything of it, and many a scrape I get into at the Works through forgetting to order certain things at the proper time. For instance, when I had a dredger to get ready for action, it was found, when it came to the scratch, that there was no scum cock for the boiler, no posts for the handrails, etc.. etc. I was more sinned against than sinning that time however, as the job was suddenly thrown on my hands, when Pot left the Works in a state of semi-completion, and I did not know, and in the hap-hazard way things were done there, I could not find out whether certain details had been ordered or not. I believe, had Frank been given that job and told the dredger was to be chiefly the same as number so-and-so, that every drawing would have been sent out in proper order, and every question as to alteration, etc., broached in proper time, so that, when the bosses came to see it tried, it would have worked well without delay.

That's a very long eulogium on the poor dear smiler; let's hope it will also turn out to be true of him. Do you ever hear from the old Coke? I suppose you do too, though it seems as if from London to Dawlish was so short a distance it was scarcely worth writing. How's he getting on, and which is he? A manager or a millionaire, or, peradventure, a clerk? Tell Pot to let me know as soon as he makes his first tanner from his invention, and I will stand myself a cigar in honour of the occasion. I ought to write him a jaw too, but in case I shouldn't be able to at present, just tell him, please, that even supposing he fails in getting the advantages of his machine recognised in England, he would stand quite as good, if not a better chance, of doing so here. This country, or better still as I believe, the States, is far more ready and willing to accept and make use of improvements than the old one, and he may possibly not know that an English patent does not hold good here, and vice-versa, though both countries are under English rule. Just to give you an instance of the go-ahead nature of the Works here, I can tell you that Hartley, my employer, has had sixteen patents to procure from one Works alone, in the space of six months. I believe it is a large saw mill, or any way there's a large saw mill connected with them, for the machine I am engaged upon now is for sharpening saws, and they light their Works by gas. made from sawdust, which is another of their patents.

Well, I've got off the scenery so far, and there's the weather to come yet, lots of it too. We've been having no end of weather lately. Sunday was cold and dull, nearly freezing the whole day. Monday ditto, with the addition of a

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breeze. Tuesday, no breeze, and as warm as toast, simply a beautiful summer's day. Wednesday just as hot, but blowing hard, and to-day. Thursday, cold as ever, and still blowing. I suppose at this time of year it's bound to change any five minutes. *Friday*. I must mail this in about an hour, but half that time would suffice to run me dry. By-the-bye, I may as well tell you that my watch goes beautifully. It needed a good deal of regulating, and that took a long time, but at length I have got it quite near enough to perfection for all practical purposes. It gains steadily now at the rate of about a minute and a half a week. I have timed it by a gun that is fired every day at noon from the grounds of the Houses of Parliament. It goes off by electricity, I believe, or the time is given by electricity from Montreal. Doesn't it sound rather funny, to hear of the *grounds* of the Houses of Parliament? It would to a Londoner, I know, but such is the case. There is such heaps of room everywhere in this great draughty country, that they may just as well take twenty acres for their buildings as two, that's just about it, I should think; it must be quite twenty, and not a single flower or, even as far as I know, a flowering shrub in the place; nothing but level lawns and walks or roads, beautifully kept, I admit. Anyone of the lawns would make half-a-dozen first-rate tennis courts, but the whole affair, seen from a little distance, looks like a painted scene. It's just a mass of even green relieved or embarrassed, as the case may be, by the straight up and down yellow houses, which houses also, in my opinion, have precious little architectural beauty to boast of, bar the centre one, perhaps, which is the house of Parl., par excellence, the others being only departmental ones. There is a very jolly walk, though round at the back of them, where I went last Sunday, you see the houses with their grounds occupy a sort of promontory, which juts out into the river, or rather into a little lake formed by it at its bend. The lawns must be from eighty to one hundred feet above the level of the water, and it is about half way down the banks, which are more than steep, that the walk in question runs. Fifty years ago this must have been one of the prettiest spots in Canada, and now anyone standing there has only the great wooden-looking houses at his back, and a colony of saw mills in front. The saw mills are out-and-out the most interesting of the two. The amount of wood cut up there every day is enormous. I believe Ottawa is the lumbering centre of Canada; any way, there are acres and acres of wood all cut up into planks or battens, and stacked thirty feet high and as close as possible, yet it all looks new, which shows that it must be shipped away at an enormous rate. Going to shut up now suddenly. Give my love to Miss Harley, or something a little milder if you would rather, and believe me, with love also to the rest of the family circle, which will now, I suppose, include a Mrs. Daddy Cockburn,

Your loving Son, J. SETON COCKBURN.

202, Bank Street, Ottawa.

November 7th, '84.

Dear Mother,

This is Friday night again, and I have not begun a letter till now, but the pure fact of the matter is, that I can say all I have got to say in about ten minutes. I have been making enquiries in accessible quarters about rents and taxes, etc., and it seems to me that in the towns at any rate they are just as high as they are in England. Most of the houses in the quiet, respectable sort of streets average about twenty to twenty-five dollars per month, including everything but water-rate, which is three dollars per month. The cost of living I should say, is decidedly less, or else how can lodging-house keepers board and lodge people for from three-and-a-half to five dollars per week in the towns, and from as low as two-and-a-half in the country. Of course, I can't tell you anything about the actual cost of the different articles of food. I would as soon go and bargain with a linen draper about a fathom of calico as go and enquire the price of vegetables while standing between two fat old market women. You see I know precious little about the country, bar half-a-day or so spent at Hardy's farm, I have never been out of the towns. Every time I sit down to write to you I spend half my time thinking who I can tackle on the subjects of your enquiries, and every time all that comes of it is, ask Barnet. Barnet and Hartley are the only two people I know here as yet; the former, you know, is the man that got me my job. He put my name down yesterday for a member of The St. Andrew's Society; the subscription is one dollar per annum, and the avowed objects of the

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Society are the finding out and assisting of needy or unfortunate Scotchmen. I did not join on account of any charitable feelings toward my countrymen, but simply for the purpose of making acquaintances. It will all help in making general enquiries about the country. Besides, who knows if I may not be in want of a kilt myself some day. (When I send you a photo' of myself in full war paint you'll know I am hard up again). Talking about clothing matters, I do not think they are much, if at all, more expensive than in England. You can get a very good great-coat or a suit of clothes for ten dollars, though of course that is mostly in the ready-made department. I asked to-day what a coat like my ulster would cost, and they said from 20 to 24 dollars, equal from £4 3s. 4d. to £5. The price in Gateshead was £4 10s. So it seems that clothes made to order are very much the same, and ready made are perhaps rather dearer. I got a fur collar put on my monkey-jacket, which cost 7 dollars; it's a good deal, but I may be able to do without a fur cap, as the collar when turned up comes nearly up to the top of my head; it's just about six inches deep of beaver skin, which, being a light brown, looks simply swagger on my dark brown coat. We have had a taste of winter here lately, and though the thermometer did not go much below 10 or 15 degrees under freezing temperature, the wind, which blew hard, cut so sharply that I felt certain that when it got 40 or 50 degrees colder I should feel very glad I had got a warm animal on my throat. There was about two or three inches of snow which nearly all thawed before it froze. The snow fell on Tuesday, then it turned to rain, which continued in a regular down-pour till Wednesday morning, by which time the streets were a sight to behold. Spark Street, the principal mud path in Ottawa, looked like a canal of pea soup. It was covered from one end to the other with about three inches of liquid mud. One enterprising shop rigged up a canoe and moored it to the side walk, all decorated with flags, and with "boats or yachts on hire" painted in large letters. That night I went to an oyster feed at Hartley's. I had made up my mind to be bored, but was most agreeably disappointed. Hartley met me at the door, and immediately began offering me all that his house contained in the way of dry socks, slippers, etc. From the moment he appeared in a smoking-cap and dressing-gown, with a tremendous pipe, leading the way, I knew I had not come out for nothing. We went slick up to his den, where he put a box of famous cigars by my side, and a box of chessmen and a board in front. I played away perfectly happy as you may imagine, and with the assistance of three smokes succeeded in vanquishing all comers, including my boss himself. He evidently thought he had got me easily, for he had taken two or three of my pieces, but I had laid a foul plot, and at last The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold and I nobbled his king without a struggle. We then adjourned to visit the oysters; there were two great washing-basins chock full, and we all squatted round in the kitchen and set to work to get rid of them as fast as we could open them. I lasted them all out, and finished both dishes. I guess I did about four or five dozen. Misfortunes never come singly, no more do the opposite, and next day I had some more in the regular fare of my diggings. What do you think of that for a boarding-house? And last night I had some more again in an eating-house. They are only 20 cents a dozen, and very good.

This is a fearful scrawl, but it's being done at a tremendous rate to see if I can't fill up this sheet before mail time. By jove! no, it's a quarter to eight. Love to everybody.

J. SETON COCKBURN.

202, Bank Street, Ottawa,

November 12th, '84.

My Dear Mother,

This letter is as usual addressed to you and meant for a good many other people besides. Firstly, I think I shall have to start some sort of arrangement by which I shall be able to find out, on reference to it, what the subject-matter of such-and-such a letter was. In fact, what I really want is a copying-press, for I can't remember what I have told you in answer to your letters and what I have not, and I notice the same questions occur in a good many of them. Well, I sha'nt get a copying-press anyhow, I'll practice self-denial, and get a five-cent. diary instead. Talking about cents. reminds me of an item of news concerning money. Money will

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undoubtedly go further here than in the old country, but it needs a more determined economy to make it do so, and the reason is that it's all in such small pieces. The only coins are half-dollars, quarters, ten and five cent pieces, and the copper cents. of these the cents. and half-dollars are comparatively rare. As a rule, the lowest price charged for anything is five cents. It is such an insignificant little piece of tin, and there are such a *tremendous lot of them knocking about*. I don't think I have had a quarter of a dollar's worth of copper through my fingers since I've been in the country. There is scarcely any use for them except for stamp-money and to give to beggars, which happily are also rare. In England the small silver coins are almost useless, and the prices of different things vary by pence or half-pence. One goes into an hotel, for instance, for a glass of beer and forks out twopence, or a packet of cigarette papers, one penny. There it goes up from the pence to the shillings, and from the shillings to the pound, and the shillings form a sort of barrier between the small every-day expenses (that *might be avoided*) and the pounds which are the real wealth. Here the practical scale of money is 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, etc., cents. I got in a rage and smashed my pen because the brute would'nt write, which has blown all my sophistries, as Daddy would call them, to the winds, so I'll shut up for to-night. Now here's a new pen and a new night, Friday night too, so I must look sharp. I don't think my sophistries need much addition, being quite as clear as mud as they are. In England there are a hundred half-pence to four and twopence, and as many different prices for different things according to their value. Here there are also a hundred cents. to the dollar, but practically only twenty different prices. Therefore, one very soon looks upon a five-cent piece in about the same light as one would look at an English penny. This is a horrible pen; it's like writing with the dirty point of a pin. Now to answer father's postscript which I had overlooked till last night. As yet the weather is too mild to need more than a thin overcoat, though it is prophesied that we are going to have an exceptionally severe winter. Be that as it may, I shall wait until it comes before spending any more money. I have blued ten dols. already in winter preparations seven in a collar for my monkey-jacket, with a view to protecting my gullet against the old attacks; and three in having my ulster lined round the back and chest with chamois leather, for I found in the late spell of cold weather, which however was a mere nothing, that it let the wind through pretty quick. I have asked the price of furs generally, and the different sorts in particular. I have some recollection of being told by one house, I think in Montreal, that furs were dearer here than they were in England, because they had to be sent over there to be worked up, and then brought back here again. I should not believe too much of that, however, as it is quite as likely as not that it was the preface to an extra five dollars on the price, in view of my being an evident stranger to the country. A tailor here, the man that has done my coats for me, says he will line my ulster with minx or racoon, or the something ratskin, for 18 dollars, and, as I told mother in my last letter, he would make just such an ulster for 20 to 25 dols., so that you could get a very good fur-lined coat for 40 dollars, or about eight guineas. Of course the furs I have mentioned are not beautiful soft affairs like beaver or sealskin, but I imagine they are almost if not quite as warm. I tried on a coat to-day, while pricing different things, of Australian grey bear. The fur was very thick and fairly soft, and I felt about 10 degrees warmer the moment I got inside it. It was made entirely out of the fur (hair outside), and lined with some sort of black soft canvas stuff. The price was 25 dols., but it was too thick and cumbersome to be useful for anything but driving or travelling. I have not got to the end of my researches upon this subject, so I will write more when I learn more. I don't know yet what the cost of lining a long coat with one of the better furs would be. Father asked if I had got all instruments I wanted, as he said Pot might send them out to me. I think I can manage with what I have got now. I had to buy them, as I could not wait to write to England. They ran away with another ten dols., and have turned out anything but A 1. I cannot answer all your questions yet, Mother, but here is something. There are plenty of small 10 to 18 acre farms about Ottawa, at a rent of from 60 to 100 dols. per annum, though the houses on them are generally pretty bad. This is a very difficult question to get to the bottom of, as there are no estate agents here that I can find, consequently all enquiries have to be made through private friends, which takes time, and also a certain amount of caution, in this inquisitive community. But I am learning more every day, and you shall have it all as fast as I get it.

In haste,

Your loving Son, J. SETON COCKBURN.

Love to everybody, as usual.

202, Bank Street, Ottawa,