

Have received, I will  
send your note to  
Dallas.  
Yours,  
Geo. H. R.

George  
London. March 19  
1871.

McGILL UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES
ACC. NO. 2211/38
REF. 9

Dear Papa.

Prof Ramsay has now got  
so far as the end of the Silurian. His first-  
sixteen or seventeen lectures were purely  
physical geology. Chemical nature of the  
earth's crust. Theories concerning its consolida-  
tion. Denudation, by rivers, seas, & last-but-  
not-least glaciers. Volcanoes, earthquakes  
upheaval & depression of land. Deposition  
contortion & metamorphism of strata, — &  
numerous instances of all these facts.

He seemed, I thought a little too fond of  
long columns of figures, with regard to  
many of these themes, which really convey no  
idea to the mind. This physical geology is  
I think his principal forte, & now that he  
has got on to the stratigraphical part of the

Subject- he is not quite so clear. That  
is to say, that while describing well the physical  
changes of the various periods, he gives the  
possibilities in a rather promiscuous manner,  
giving ~~me~~ some trouble to arrange the  
notes, when ~~they~~<sup>I</sup> come to write them over  
in the evening.

I am still quite undecided about the  
course to pursue with regard to the Natural  
History & your letter was not quite  
definite enough, & has left me almost as  
unbiased as before. This year, & I believe  
in future there is to be no special exam; as  
was formerly the case - for the Edward Forbes  
medal, but it will go to the highest <sup>marks</sup> in the  
Nat. Hist. & Paleontology exams. From present  
appearances I fancy I might have some chance  
for next year, if no dangerous competitors  
turn up meanwhile, & if I managed to  
lose the Nat. Hist. this year (& it would be  
no good unless in the first class) I would  
still have to attend the lectures, as a help with  
the Paleontology. These things almost  
decide me to not to attempt the Nat. Hist.

exam. this year but to go to the paleontology lectures & take notes as I have done with the Natural History, which will help me for next-year. Then comes the Laboratory question. It would be very useful to go back there for the last three months of this session, but I could not of course let work there interfere with the geology exam. which I believe comes off toward the end of May, & in which I would of course like to do as well as possible.

With regard to next-year, I might either take Metallurgy, or Mining, together with Applied Mechanics, as well as the Nat. Hist. & paleontology. but could hardly take all three subjects besides, with the idea of going in for any examination in them. It might be possible to go in for an associateship in one of these subjects besides the Geology (including Nat. Hist. & Paleont.) but either Metallurgy, or Mining taken with the intention of an associateship in them implies 6 months work in the Metallurgical Laboratory. Then again as extra subjects I might take Metallurgy & Mining without Applied Mechanics, & with no intention of getting an associateship.

in them, but simply learning as much  
about them as possible, while allowing due  
time for the Natural History & Paleontology. In  
this case I might take perhaps some  
metallurgical laboratory work also, but  
would not need to extend it over six  
months unless convenient. This

Laboratory work would of course be practically  
very useful, embracing cupelling & many other  
such commercial methods of assay. If I  
intend going to this laboratory I must  
make up my mind before the end of this  
session, & apply for a place, as they are  
always taken up for a long time before.

About such of these matters as will be  
in time by return, please let me know.

I really do not care which course I take  
in regard to the Metallurgy Mining &c, but would  
like you to decide which you think most  
useful.

Yours affectionately Son

George W. Dawson

Have received, I will