

My Uncle
Dr. William Bell Dawson.

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MY UNCLE

Dr William Bell Dawson.

1.

My Uncle William Bell Dawson was born at Pictou N.S. on May 2nd. 1853 - He was the eldest son of my Grandfather Sir William Dawson, who was Principal of McGill University from 1855 - 1893. Uncle William came to Montreal when his Father first took over that post - He became a scholar at the old Montreal High School, then known as the High School of McGill University - He spent six years here, and graduated second in his class, then entered McGill from where he graduated in 1874 as B.A. with the gold medal in geology and natural science. The following year he received his Bachelor of Applied Science degree and entered Ecole de Ponts at Chrussees in Paris - This school was a special school for training French government engineers, and was open to foreign students only on passing an examination - He remained there for three years, taking a course comprising all branches of civil engineering, and graduated in 1890 with diploma of special merit.

After leaving the Paris School, Dr Dawson added many degrees to his laurels, both for his study and his outstanding work - He was a Master of Arts, Master of Engineering, Doctor of Science, Member of the Engineering Institute of Canada - Member or Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada - Member of the Institute of Civil Engineers, London England, with the Watt Gold Medal; and Laureate of the Academy of Science, Paris, from which he received two prizes for his work in tide and current research.

Following five years of private practise in Montreal, he joined the Dominion Bridge Co. as engineer in 1882 - He was employed at designing various types of railway and road bridges. In a small booklet on the history of the Dominion Bridge Co. the following appears.

" Nor has it been only written within their own circle that the Company's Staff have contributed to the advancement of science and engineering - The Engineering Institute of Canada shows that the employees have contributed on many occasions to papers and discussions of highly technical subjects, and some have been awarded medals of distinction - Dr W. Bell Dawson, Member of the Institute of Civil Engineers of Great Britain had much of the practical part of his professional experience in the company's employ in the designing of bridges "

In 1884 Dr D. joined the Canadian Pacific Railway, as assistant engineer He was chiefly employed in designing bridges for the C.P.R. lines then under construction between Montreal and Saint John N.B. and the replacing of bridges on the Montreal Quebec line, as well as difficult bridge work, around Lake Superior - His bridge designing was of an outstanding nature, his designs included the great cantilever bridge over the Saint John River.

In 1894, he entered upon what he described as his ' main career ' He was appointed to inaugurate and carry out the survey of tides and currents about Canada, working for the Dominion Government. He did valuable work on both the Pacific and Atlantic coasts.

For 30 years he was head of this department - it had three branches; the recording of tides as a basis of future tide tables for correlation with the currents; the investigation of currents on Canada's leading steamship routes and tide levels in Canadian harbours. Much of the data compiled by this Survey in its early years, became of inestimable value to geodetic survey when it was established in later years, and won Dr Dawson international acclaim.

The Survey carried on in the Bay of Fundy, The Gulf of St Lawrence, Belle Isle Strait, around Newfoundland and on the West Coast, created the necessity of many new instruments and methods, these being invented by Dawson to fill the need.

The results of the Tides and Current Survey were widely published and dispelled many apprehensions which previously had resulted in many unnecessary wrecks - The information was not only of value to navigation but benefited the fishing industry, and in the east coast the coal industry - bringing about a new certainty to navigation, and an incalculable saving of ships and human lives.

Up to the time William Dawson began his Survey, the only tidal table in existence was for Quebec Harbour, and that was said to be inaccurate and of questionable value to shipping interests. Later Dr Dawson made a Survey to calculate all the tide levels of the various ports of Canada - which gave marine circles authentic data.

One of the theories current in marine circles in the early days of Canada's transatlantic traffic, was that the Strait of Belle Isle, the passage of which was regarded as a perilous undertaking, had a one-way current - There had been many wrecks in these days, principally as the result of going aground on the Island of Anticosti - The fact that these vessels were known to be in the correct course, appeared to bear out the belief in the one-way current - as a result of my Uncle's work - the Belle Isle theory was disproved, it being found that the water in the strait was tidal as elsewhere.

It was said, that in these early years, rival shipping centres of Canada's growing overseas trade, made use of erroneous reports about dangerous currents alleged to exist for the purpose of diverting business to older and better charted shipping routes.

Inland Canadians who may have wondered what benefit they derived from the expenditure on this work, were reminded by Dr Dawson that " Inland provinces are largely dependent on ocean transportation for goods they use - on the otherhand the price which the farmer receives for his wheat is affected by the cost of transportation to the consumer countries - Anything therefore that increases the safety of ocean navigation and reduces marine insurance rates, is a direct benefit to those inland ".

Ocean vessels had been navigating along the shores of Canada for more than 400 years, but it was not till 1896 that the complete study of tidal currents was made.

In 1904, Dr Dawson won the Gay Prize for the best determination of mean sea level of the North Atlantic.

In 1922, there was held the first International Conference on Oceanography, and Dr D. was the delegate for Canada on tidal matters.

In 1923, the Academy of Science of Paris announced that the award of the Henri Becquerel Foundation was to go to Dr Dawson for his tidal and current survey work, and for his publications on the subject - This was the largest award given by the Society and under the heading ' Scientific Research '.

Many years later, I, his niece had occasion to take a sailing trip from Newfoundland to North Sydney N. S., and when being caught in the worst gale of the season, our Captain tried to put in to a harbour in St Pauls Is, the wind however was so strong, that we were blown 10 miles north of it, and probably just as well, as it was a very rocky coast - In scanning a scientific article, some months later, I was interested to note - that this island was one of the first places where Dr Dawson set up a tidal gage instrument - and I hoped that in doing so, that he had had better weather than we experienced.

My Uncle was 40 years old when he started his Tidal and Current Survey of Canada, and from then on he spent a great portion of the year at sea on the ship "Gulnare" commissioned for the purpose. There on many lonely vigils, the noted scientist observed the mysteries of the deep - How often the force of the Psalmists statement was impressed upon him "By His knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew" for only God could make a path in the deep without any material device. Although these thirty years made him perhaps the foremost authority in the world on the subject of tides - yet it was just the prelude to his great religious work.

The following article appeared in the Montreal Gazette in May 1937 -
 "In the recent announcement the the steamer "Gulnare" is to be disposed of ..
 little is said concerning this vessel. Except for being once on the rocks on the north shore, her career was peaceful, but it was nevertheless, notable because of her association with the advances made in the navigation of the St Lawrence route " -

Built in 1693, the Gulnare had been in Admiralty surveying operations in Newfoundland waters, under Commander Tooker previous to the time she was purchase by the Canadian Government in 1903 - At the time of this purchase Dr Dawson had already set up a series of tide stations along the St Lawrence and throughout the region of the Gulf - thus there was a good basis for the investigation of the currents along the various steamship routes when the Gulnare became available.

In those days, as stated before, information had been handed out that the Gulf of St Lawrence was a most dangerous region - but it was found that in the open Gulf the current seldom exceeded 1 mile an hour - Also, as stated before there had been a persistent idea that a strong current ran constantly inward through Belle Isle Atrait - this was very misleading, and accounted for the wreck of many inward-bound vessels on the east end of Anticosti. For in foggy weather these vessels supposed they would always be ahead of their reckoning in turning in to the St Lawrence, being carried forward clear of Anticosti by this purely imaginary current.

The Gulnare was used in all investigations in Belle Isle Strait; on the steamer routes past Newfoundland; and in Northumberland Strait - All of which afforded valuable information as to the currents - She was also used in the Survey in the outer part of the Bay of Fundy, on the route from St John N.B. to Europe, from which resulted the first "Current chart" published for any region in North American waters.

Day after day, week after week, during these investigations Dr D. remained on this ship, his only companionship being that of several rahter inefficient helpers - Through fog and storm and loneliness, he stuck to his job of making unending observations which were to become of such value.

It would be interesting to explain the appliances that were devised in the early days for use at sea, to obtain a continuous record of the strength and direction of the current day and night - It will suffice to say that current meters were adapted to the purpose, with electrical connections to the recording instrument on board ! Unlike ordinary surveying, rain or fog made no difference; it was only heavy weather that interrupted the work - The Gulnare was equipped with deep anchorage, and could anchor at any depth up to 250 fathoms to study the currents on steamship routes - During these observations, weather of any sort might come along, and shelter was often far to seek - It is hard to estimate the patience, endurance and persistancy of purpose that must have been

put forward by Dawson during these years.

My Uncle said, that he found his inspiration and his ideal in his Father Sir William Dawson, who though a man of exacting occupation, had always made time in his life to be with his children and to develop their interests. Dr B.D. would recall how he had worked with his Father in his garden, which was close to where the engineering building now is -- and how Sir William had once bought him a printing press and instructed him how to operate it, or how he had shown him that the clay to be found in a certain corner of the campus could be backed into actual dishes in an improvised out-door oven. -- This affectionate companionship with my Father, which broadened into admiration as I realized more and more his outstanding achievements and the honor in which he was held was ever before me goading me on to make something of myself.

In 1924 having completed his government task, he retired to his Westmount home in Grove Park, where again following in his Fathers footsteps, he turned to the field of research, which dealt with the harmony between science and religion which has occupied him ever since. He wrote with much knowledge and much clarity of style, and published many articles and leaflets also booklets dealing with this subject -- Many of these have been published in Australia, England and India as well as Canada and the U.S.A. and have been widely circulated. Some of these including his book " The Bible confirmed by Science " have been translated into Chinese, Japanese and Korean. This work brought him into correspondence with persons in many parts of the world -- Indeed attending to his correspondence became one of his chief occupations -- His letters written in a remarkably plain and steady hand, were always concise and always prompt.

In 1925, The Montreal Gazette prints :

" Dr W.B. Dawson, the sole surviving son of Sir William Dawson, famous geologist and Principal of McGill University, was present today at the unveiling to his Memorial in the State Museum at Albany -- Dr Dawson is 70 years of age and represented the family " .

Dr Dawson was particularly expert on the subject of the work of the ancients in the science of the calendar -- He says " I do not like the unscholarly attitude prevalent today, of disparaging the ancients -- It is an erroneous view, for not only were they great astronomers, but the ancient Chaldeans were able to predict eclipses -- In Egypt too, the temples were set truly to the Equinox or to the Solstice to form masonry telescopes -- The Chaldeans in Abrahams day knew all the basic principles of astronomy -- he said that astronomy was the test of the level of a peoples intelligence. In the matter of the calendar, the Hebrews surpassed all the nations by preserving both lunar month and the solar year, in an extremely simple and effective way, which could never go wrong -- Much later in history the calendar of Julius Caesar, although related to the sun only, came to be ten days out in the course of time, and had to be radically corrected in the 16th century -- There was an actual decline in the knowledge of astronomy from the days of the Chaldeans to the Romans -- Also a good deal of the knowledge attributable to the Greeks was borrowed from the Ancients -- Furthermore Dr D. says -- " it is interesting to note that the Ancients in their endeavour to keep the lunar month in their calendar, worked out cycles which harmonize the month with the solar year of the seasons -- The most accurate cycles of this type ever discovered have been deduced from the periods in the Book of Daniel, as these predicted periods run down the centuries in the solar and lunar reckoning, in their limitation of the times of the Gentiles " . Again he says " the Ancients knew all the fundamentals of what we are taught to think is modern in science and culture. In Cain's day, the people had all the basic musical instruments " .

One of Dr Dawson's widely discussed papers was titled -- " Prophetical number in Daniel in relation to celestial cycles, and is an enchanting piece of evidence on the mathematical precision of our God who has fore ordained from all eternity the very movements of history in its march to that climax of Christ's second advent when the ' The Kingdom of the World shall become the Kingdom of our Lord "

One of Dr Dawson's incidental studies was archaeology -- he was in correspondence with most of the noted men in the field, and usually received autographed copies of their books -- He would point out, how this science had disproved the theory of evolution in civilization.

Dr Dawson holds that the theory of Evolution, insofar as it implies a gradual development of man from the early level of savagery, is misleading. Early man, he maintains, was highly endowed with intelligence, and excavation has revealed ancient seats of culture in Chaldea, Egypt and Palestine, with civilization as advanced as our own. His papers are currently read before meetings of the Victoria Institute of London, along with those of other distinguished contemporary scientists such as Sir Andrew Flemming -- One of his papers which caused widespread interest was on the subject of the calendar, spoken of before. Sir William, his Father had been known as Darwin's most distinguished opponent, and his son was to continue to be the champion of the biblical word against the evolutionists. His pamphlets on the subject comprised one of his first short works, which was used by school children all over the British Empire. This group consisted of five booklets called " Is Evolution true ? " In these he provided the boys and girls with the scientific facts to support the Genesis story of creation -- His great talent in writing, lay in the fact that he could restate scientific data in the simplest form to suit very young minds, as well as write papers for the learned scientists of the world -- his secret was in a classic simplicity of thought which was the fruit of great knowledge, supplemented with practical experience in his subject. -- Dr Dawson pointed out that " Nearly all the great classes of animals which still exist in the world today have deteriorated from their magnificence in the past, and others continue to the present day exactly as they were long ages ago, without any development whatever. "

Professor Huxley said " If Evolution were consistently accepted, it made it impossible to believe in the Bible ".

The following short passages are taken from the Evolution booklets. But first let me quote a few words written in a letter to me from my Uncle ...

" My dear Lois: You were so much interested in the article on the Eye, which I read to you and your children, that I now enclose the other two booklets which have just been published -- My object is to uphold the Bible, and to show that these evolutionary theories of ' constant change ' and the ' Survival of the fittest ', do not hold -- I put the notes separately, as backing for what I say.

From " The Eye "

" Do we realize how remarkable it is that we can see ? we do not often think about this as carefully as we might -- for the eye is a very wonderful thing Let us look back into the past and notice the first creatures that had eyes, and what they were like. When we consider the eye, we find that there were two different kinds of eyes -- A bird has one kind of eye, which we may call the soft eye, and an insect has another or the other kind, called the multiple eye. If you examine the eye of the house fly, you will find it is made up of a great many small eyes or lenses set together. A bird keeps a sharp lookout for itself, but it has to turn its head to do so -- But a fly with its multiple eye, sees all round at once, and does not need to turn its head, that is why it is so hard to hit ! When we go back and examine the remains of creatures preserved in fossils, we find that this multiple eye is very ancient indeed, and because of the way it is

made, it is very perfectly preserved -- We read in Genesis, that the first creatures lived in the sea, and this is just what we find -- Amongst the very earliest living things that we know, are vast numbers of creatures like crabs and lobsters and these all have that multiple eye -- There were also quantities of shells and sea snails -- some of these no doubt had eyes, but their soft eyes are not preserved, for that kind of eye is only known in the past ages by the finding of eye sockets in creatures that had skulls -- Yet this much may be said about it; that in one of the ages of the past, there were eyes, far larger than any in the world today -- These were the eyes of great reptiles, something like immense crocodiles, the eye-balls being so large that they had to be supported by bony plates.

There are some learned Professors, who when asked " How creatures came to have eyes ? " will answer " Why they developed " -- We may well reply, that if this were so, why has the eye not improved in all these long ages of time ? for the earliest eye known is exactly the same as crabs, lobsters and flies have today -- there is no development, no improvement at all. The true answer to our question is, that the eye was perfect from the first, and perfectly suited to the creatures that used it -- When we turn to the other kind of eye, which can only be traced back half so far, we find likewise, that it has not developed continuously, for no eyes in the world today, that is those in skull sockets are as large as those in the past. -- Then why listen to those who tell us that everything has ' developed ' from something mean and low ? Would it not be better, to give heed to what the scriptures say; " And when the Creation was finished, God looked upon everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good. " The eye was good as He first made it, and these ancient crabs and lobsters themselves, were really finer and more varied than the ones now living in the sea -- none of these things had any need to develop to improve themselves. "

From " What Three Ancient Shells show Us "

" We are often told that all the different kinds of creatures in the world have developed from some speck of living material; and that this went on, until all the birds, beasts and fishes came to be what they are now -- This idea has become very popular, for it was thought that if all things changed of themselves, and kept on improving it would explain everything, and we would not need any longer to believe what the Bible tells us, that God created all things But as our knowledge increases, instead of finding that this idea of development was a simple explanation, more and more difficulties keep coming up The difficulty is that many of the creatures which we can trace through long ages have never changed at all. We may take three little shells of different kinds, as examples of this, one of which is very ancient, its name is " Lingula " it was extraordinarily abundant in the early times -- One thing about it is quite remarkable, for almost all shells are made of lime, the ordinary carbonate of lime, but the shell of the Lingula is phosphate of lime, the material of bones and horn among the higher animals, which make this shell very unusual -- The Lingula and others of its family are interesting examples of a type of beings continued from the dawn of life until now -- So through all this immense stretch of time, this kind continues the same; and it still has a shell of horn, unlike other shells.

Later we find another shell, still in the earliest group, it is the oldest land snail ever discovered, it is called a Pupa, and lived in the time of the coal formation -- it is precisely like some that live today -- We ask then, why has it never changed that we might call an improved kind ?

The great question which stands against evolution is; Why should any creature change into something else; and what was it that could have caused the change ? Charles Darwin tried very carefully to answer this question; but the answer he gave is now found quite insufficient. A Learned Professor has recently

maintained that development is due to ' Purposive striving ' - This means that the humblest creature has in its little heart an earnest wish to be better and larger, and strives continually to be so - But our little Pupa replies against this; for it has been content to be the same little beauty that it always was.

Another shell without change, this time a fresh water snail a ' Limnaea ' We find it somewhat after the middle of the geological series in which there is life - but in the ages since it has not changed in the very least - And each of these ages is longer than the whole range of human history.

These three shells stand out against evolution or development; and they point instead to God their Maker.

From " The Monsters of Long Ago "

There was once a time in the world when there was no living thing anywhere, either in the water or on the land. Since life began, there have been three great stretches of time; and the kind of creatures which were most important in each of these periods were quite different. Learned men call these three periods - " Ancient Kind of Life " - The Middle Life " and " The Newer Life ".

In the first of these times there were only sea-creatures - shells, crabs and afterwards fish - but many of them were much grander and more active than those in the sea now - In the Middle-time, there were creatures on the land, these were immense reptiles like lizards and crocodiles or alligators, but very terrible - In the Third period, we come to entirely different animals; not so much in their shape, but in the way they are made, for all the newer animals, from mice to deer and lions, have a different kind of heart and warm blood - They do not lay eggs, as all the earlier animals had done -- Last of all MAN was created.

The time when the great reptiles had everything their own way, was probably the most remarkable in history of the world - For they were the Lords of Creation; they swam in the sea, they walked on the land, and they flew in the air - There was a swimming-monster called the Ichthyosaurus or Fish-lizard, which had a head like a crocodile, though altogether it looked like a fish - and such eyes as it had, there never was such an eye before or since. Another kind had a long thin neck, with a small head, almost like a serpent - it was fitted for shallow water, it could lie motionless on the bottom, raising its head occasionally to breathe, or to dart out after its prey, for it lived mostly on fish. One of these water-lizards, perhaps the most dreadful was about 40 feet long and its teeth round like tusks and a foot long, its head was 8 feet long, and its body very massive and powerful. It had four paddles something like a whales, but standing out six feet, it had a long tail, and could make prodigious speed. There were all kinds and sizes there were able to run on land. Yet the most terrible of all were in the air - they had wings of skin, such as a bat has, and instead of a beak, they had long jaws with frightful teeth - and as well as having claws on their feet they had clutching claws at the joint of the wing, some of them were as much as twenty feet across their wings, one was said to have a spread of 27 feet - This creature was more like a dragon of the fairy stories, than any other thing that ever really lived. Though these creatures controlled the air, sea, and land - the true birds with wings made of feathers had their beginning while the reptiles still lived -- SO the Bible is right when it speaks of birds just at this time.

But why was it that all these strong and powerful animals died out and passed away ? There are no longer in the world such terrible teeth or such large eyes - We are often told that creatures have gradually improved and changed into something better, because they have fought their way up, and taken the place of those which were weaker - But no creatures were ever so well equipped and able to push their way, and to get plenty to eat as these wonderful animals (reptiles) All our learning cannot explain why they did not keep hold of the world for good and all. When we turn to the Bible, we find out why - It was because God had

a purpose in mind, thus these animals had their day, and gradually disappeared to make way for the quieter and more peaceful animals which were better suited for man, who God placed in the world, and thus completed his Creation - "

The above article on Monsters of Long ago, was printed in the Toronto Globe in 1934.

My Uncle was a great student of the Prophecies - His favourite theme in the Scriptures was the second coming of Christ, and he wrote a great deal on this subject, as well as giving lectures to Bible Study groups on it. He would say that Christians were often inclined to stress the blessings of the christian life in this world, and dwelt too little on the Resurrection, which was the great event to which all Christianity pointed; it was the promise the Bible speaks of so much, and which the Old Testament saints saw afar off and embraced; and he said it should be the most anticipated event looked forward to by the Christian Church.

The following are some remarks made by my Uncle on the significance of prophesy.

1. Prophecy is addressed to the People of God, for their warning and for their encouragement - It is not prediction to the world at large as to future events. The first prophecies were made to Adam, Noah and Abraham.

2. The purpose of prophesy is not to outline general history - It portrays the career of Empires in which the people of God dwell; and depicts the conditions under which they were to live; all as ordained by God's providence. Daniel thus outlines twenty-five centuries, for the guidance of the saints; and Revelation likewise depicts the dangers during the Christian era, ever pointing to hope for those who overcome. Imagery in prophesy develops progressively, and it reaches its height in Revelation.

3. Prophecy concerning the age of the times of the Gentiles begins at the era of the Captivity in Babylon - Three prophets are outstanding in this era, Jeremiah is the first; his warnings are eminently applicable to present conditions - Ezekial affords further light, and is highly symbolical - Daniel affords a key to the interpretation of the whole.

4. The Restoration after the Captivity, is a type of the " Restoration of all things " at the close of the Great Age - The four books dealing with the Restoration are : Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai and Zachariah - they are highly significant at present, in depicting the opposition to the completion of God's purposes and their accomplishment notwithstanding.

5. The book of Revelation must refer to what concerns the people of God, not to what transpires after they are no longer in the world; for this would be out of accord with the whole tenor of prophesy throughout scripture - Its portrayal is highly symbolical, in accordance with the developement of imagery. There are three interposed explanatory passages; first, the view presented to the early church in the martyr days (chapter 7) then the enlightening view from past to future which came to light at the Reformation; forming the inspiration of that movement (chapters 12, 13, and 14) and thirdly, the view from the standpoint of the era of vials, revealed by one of the vial angels; standing immediately before the final triumph of Christ and his followers (chaps 17 and 18) In harmony with this, there are three sets of Expositors of Revelation, the early Fathers, the Reformers, and the Commentators of the 19th century.

Prophecy understood on these lines would surely be enlightening and heartening to believers. "

I always found my Uncle a source of great interest and pleasure, he was so well informed on every topic, there was scarcely a subject upon which he could not give you a variety of ideas, each on being explained in the minutest detail.

I recall so well the afternoons, when I took tea at 7 Grove Park with my Uncle and his wife, my Aunt Florence - They were always the happiest couple and most devoted - Each in their own way were versatile conversationalists being able to converse freely on all matters of the day.

My Aunt Florence Jane Mary Elliott, was the daughter of an Imperial Army Colonel, who in the early days was stationed at Halifax - It was at this time that William Bell met and wooed her.

The Grove Park house, their most recent one, was not large, but had a great air of composure and pleasantness about it - There were interesting treasures here and there, such as a replica of Cleopatra's Needle, and a dormant carved lion, which had come from Sir William D's home. In the hall one saw a fine collection of amulets displayed on black velvet - ferns and other green plants, set in shining brass pots, stood on small tables in the living-room and front porch. Afternoon tea was always served on a large round beautifully embossed Indian brass tray, supported on carved teak wood legs.

It was written of Uncle William that " Those who called upon him at his house, found him an attentive host, who was interested in the personality and views of his visitors, and who would draw upon his own rich experience, never in monologue but with courteous restraint, as he saw that it applied to his visitors interests or questions. He would always accompany his visitors to the porch, himself help him with his coat, and stand by the open door to wave him good-bye ! "

Both Aunt and Uncle adored children, and it was the greatest delight for them to see their grand-nieces or nephews at any time - In one letter Uncle Wm. writes " We were so pleased to see Anne yesterday, when she paid us a short visit - It is refreshing to see these young people beginning on their own account. " " I am so glad to hear a little more about Anne and Ruth, and what they are doing at school - Mary is fortunate in being left in peace at her school, when all the children at the school near here have been scattered and crowded into other schools. Ruth and I have not arranged yet for a walk; but I had a charming letter from her this morning, in which she tells me so much that is interesting - I have a special locked-up ' Treasure drawer ' for letters from these dear young people - I have letters from Anne there, but I do not think I have one from Mary yet ? "

The following is a letter written to me in 1937 -

My dear Lois:

You deserve our renewed thanks, for your generous donation of flowers on Aunt Florence's birthday - she is so skilful in arranging and making flowers last, that most of them are still fresh for Coronation Day.

I hope you all heard what went on in London today - for it is all such a contrast to the kind of celebration, for example, that Hitler has in his boastfulness - He points to his fields of bayonets, huge cannon, and mighty bombing planes as his power ! I hope your young people realize the meaning of these contrasting viewpoints - Then again, I was impressed myself today, with the contrast on the religious side - instead of the pretensions of the hierarchy of the Roman Catholics, that by the Sacrifice of the Mass they can forgive sins; in the service today in Westminster Abbey, the only sacrifice recognized is, ' The sacrifice of ourselves - King and Nation alike ' to the service of God - This is truly scriptural and Protestant; for in the New Testament, after the offering of Christ on the Cross, the only other to be found is the ' living sacrifice ' of ourselves to God, ' which is our reasonable service ' - This came to me quite forcefully today, and I wish it were more widely understood.

With love to you all

Uncle William.

1936. The letter below, is a copy of one written to Edward Winslow-Spragge Sr. on the subject of a certain Mr Giguere and the R.C. Church.

My dear Edward:

" I am enclosing an explanation about the work of Mr Giguere, that I spoke of on Monday evening - He did the very thing that you wished to have done; asking the high dignitaries of the R.C. Church, where they got their doctrines? When he found their answers unsatisfactory, he looked into the Bible for himself; and found in the Gospel the way of personal access to God and salvation through Christ -

The enclosed photo is a picture of his rented hall, where he is now bringing the message of the Gospel to large numbers in Montreal who have left the church of Rome because they are dissatisfied with it " -

Sincerely Uncle William.

As my Uncle advanced in age, and the very gates of Heaven were swinging wide for his entry, he worked ever harder - His little booklet " Forgiveness through the Blood of the Lamb " is one of the finest of its kind, and has an enormous circulation. On this subject he wrote to me in April 1935 -

My dear Lois:

You told me of the attitude of many of the young people in these days, in being adverse to accepting the doctrine of an atonement for sin, through ' blood ' and in disliking such an idea - The answer to this is the following consideration.

In such a question, it is not for us to try to think the matter out for ourselves, as we may evidently be biased by what we like or dislike - The only sure way is to study what God thinks about it - for His thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are his ways our ways " - We find then that what God declares is that " Without shedding of blood, there is no remission " Our part then, is to believe this, and to accept it, when He says so -

All through the revelation that God has given us in the Bible, we find this idea; and it is taught in a very practical way - As early as the Exodus, it was the blood of the Passover lamb sprinkled on the door posts, that saved the life of the first born son in the family, when the Egyptians perished - It was therefore a matter of life or death to accept this doctrine and act upon it.

At the other end of the Bible, in Revelation, we find exactly the same thing - When the ransomed are seen in Heaven, the question is asked, how they came to be there? and the answer is clear " These are they who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb; THEREFORE are they before the throne of God " -

It may be well also to remember that God is the Judge, as to whether each one will be admitted to Heaven or not? and when He decides on this basis, it will be a poor answer for anyone to give on the day of judgment, that he thought differently - We should therefore face the actual; for the great realities in the moral universe cannot be altered by our opinion.

It is the same at the centre of the Bible in regard to Christ; for all things centre in Him - He came into the world " To give His life a ransom for many " - He did not set aside the Old Testament sacrifices as primitive and crude idea, which could be given up or superceded; but He was Himself the fulfilment of them all - Yet it was no longer by the blood of bulls and of goats, but by His own blood, that He opened up our way of access to God. At the Last Supper, He connects His death directly with the Passover lamb; and says in plain words - " This is my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins ".

The epistles are the explanation by the Holy Spirit, of the meaning of the life and death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and all through them this same teaching runs, that He gave Himself an offering, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God -

This is merely a brief outline of so momentous a subject; but perhaps it may be helpful to those who find difficulty in it, for it is the plain teaching of the Scripture.

With my love

Uncle William.

An extract from another letter to me in 1939 -

"As to my age, I like to think as the Psalmist says, that "my times are in Thy hands" - for the length of our life is His appointment - Yet I am very thankful for these years since my retirement, in which I have been able to write on scriptural subjects - With many thanks for the admirable cake; and with my love - Uncle W.

In 1940 he writes -

"So many thanks for the wonderful hand-knitted scarf that you so kindly made for me - The remarkable 'cross-over stitch' makes such close work, it will surely be very warm - For my part, I have no trouble in solving a quadratic equation, and a problem in logarithms is simple, but knitting is quite beyond me, and I always wonder at it -"

On being invited to a party at our house, he answers the invitation by sending a card to Mr and Mrs Winslow-Spragge - On the card at the top were cut out and pasted on four tiny photographs, one of himself, one of Aunt Florence, and the other two of his two children living in Montreal - below these pictures was the following verse printed in clear and artistic writing -

"As you kindly invite
We accept with delight,
To honour once more
The good days of yore -
These four smiling faces
Will gladly, take places
At Loie's on Saturday night -
We'll powder our noses
We'll wear our best closes,
We'll be joyfully happy
and bright -"

Dr Dawsons most effective work was done between the ages of seventy and ninety And yet like Moses, the first two thirds of his life were a preparation for the last third. He was at all times a stalwart contender for the christian fundamentals, yet he possessed a gentle type of personality - He was a serious minded man not given to levity in either speech or manner, nevertheless he had a keen sense of humour, and appreciated all the amusing things that turned up in life, either in writing or in reality.

Below you will find W.D's own interpretation of a passage from a detective story.

Passage - "An amateur investigator was introduced to a police Inspector with the following explanation - 'Mr Gaffkin is noted for his powers of observation the flicker of an eyelash, the quiver of a lip - etc. nothing escapes him !

W.B.D's interpretation - base on the above, and on the general impression conveyed by most detective stories -

"I knew already that Frank had been paying attention to her, and the slight quiver in the corner of her left eye when I saw her, showed me that she had met him on the road - I did not need to ask direct questions; for I could see by the flush of pink on the tip of her nose, that he must have proposed to her - It was of keen interest to me to know the result; but she gave herself away without my asking as we continued talking - The momentary wrinkle over her right eye, made

it quite plain that she had refused him -- As she raised her eyes to mine, there was a droop in the corner of her smile, which made it easy to guess her reason for refusing Frank -- "

My Uncle adds, " We may be glad we do not always live among such keenly observant people ! "

When about to celebrate his 80th birthday, a neat little eight sided card beautifully printed in his hand came to invite us to celebrate the occasion, at his house -- Each of the eight sides of the hexagon represented a span of ten years, and was marked with the figures 10, 20, 30, and so on to 80. Before his death he celebrated his diamond wedding with his adored Florence.

An undated letter of about this period, contains the following paragraph--
My dear Lois:

" It does seem funny that we can see so little of one another -- I was really quite busy last week finishing up a paper -- and on Saturday I managed to catch a cold, so here I am writing in bed ! Aunt Florence has been trying diligently to find a thermomiter but cannot succeed; so I can't be very bad ! She keeps telling me that I am an old old man, and must be careful; but that only sounds to me like fiction, for I am still young enough to do as I am told to, and stay in bed, which proves my point. "

In 1943, the Montreal Gazette prints:

" Dr Dawson was invited to participate in the one hundredth anniversary celebration of the Montreal High School -- Dr Dawson is the oldest living graduate, he is in his 90th year, and is still active in writing on scientific matters "

Only in the last two years of his life did he have to slow down -- About two weeks before his death, I went to see him, on arriving, he was lying on the sofa partly asleep, and he kept saying " I've been very fortunate, very fortunate I've had 20 years to do what I liked after my work was completed, and I have no pain " and then he looked up with his old look and asked me if I would do an errand for him next time I went to town ?

Just previous to this visit, I had dropped in one day, and taken him for a short walk -- when we got back to the house, he said in his courtly manner " Well I'm sure this was very good of you to take me for a walk, I'm afraid it has been very dull for you " " Not at all " said I " I don't often have a chance these days to go walking with a nice young man " ! To which he laughed gayly -- He knew that he was getting weak, but he was game right to the end.

His long fruitful life terminated with only five days of illness -- He was indeed the fulfilment of the promise in Psalm I, to the man whose " Delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night -- and he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper "

" In the death of Dr w. Bell Dawson " the Montreal Gazette writes --
" Montreal has lost a fine gentleman -- He valued the fine traditions he inherited, and he lived his life with singular clarity of purpose -- Like his Father, he died after attaining his full maturity, so that his passing may be fittingly described by these words --

" Of no distemper, of no blast he died,
But fell like Autumn fruit, that mellowed long " --

May 23rd/44. at the age of 91 years.

William Bell Dawson had four children, three boys and a daughter.

His oldest son Victor was a graduate of McGill and lived his life in California, having gone there on account of his first wife's ill health. He was interested in chemical research, and was highly regarded by all who knew him.

His youngest son Heber, a genial and pleasant lad, electrically minded died after world war one, in which he served.

The son that one heard most of was Owen, who spent his life in Montreal, devoting his time to the wellfare of underprivileged boys - and more especially bad boys of the street - he had a remarkable way with them, and over a period of perhaps forty years gained the confidence and was the trusted friend of these lads, and was able to help many of them to a better and more happy way of life.

Mr Dawson started the first Boys Club in Griffintown in 1908, which began with small friendly meetings in the Nazareth Mission Hall, at which time stimulating talks and lively hymns were sung to the music of a very old organ. The Club then moved to a rented shop where a gymnasium was set up - Since then the club has developed from one stage to another, and just recently a fine large Club House has been erected, this being made possible by a large sum of money bequeathed by Owen Dawson together with an equal amount given by the Rotarians of which Owen was a member. The need for such a club has shifted from the area of Griffintown where the last boys and girls club did such wonderful work to Verdun in which locality it is fulfilling a great need. The first club had only 30 members, the new club of 1960 has 1600 members, who have their own band and facilities for all sorts of craft work and sports.

Mr Dawson was closely connected with the Juvenile Court from 1912 - 18, at which time he was assistant to the Judge - and it was said that he was slated to become its Judge, but something altered plans. At that period of his life, when he worked ceaselessly to redeem the lives of youth (1937...) there were approximately 3000 boys under the age of 16 appearing before the local court yearly.

Mr Dawson having this wonderful zeal for the wellfare of boys was appointed Director of the Boys Farm at Shawbridge in 1911 - Sectetary Treasurer in 1921 and Managing Director in 1936. He says " I have been actively connected with the growth and development of this school for the past forty years. "

Before his death he wrote " My story of the Boys Farm Shawbridge " which contains some delightful sketches of " Angels I have met " !

Cristall, Dr and Mrs Bell Dawson's only daughter lives in Montreal and busies herself with religious writing of a prophetic nature - she paints many little interesting pictures and at one time was with the Associated Screen News where she coloured their slides this requiring great skill and technical knowledge. She carries on fully the Dawson tradition of study and the spreading of knowledge.

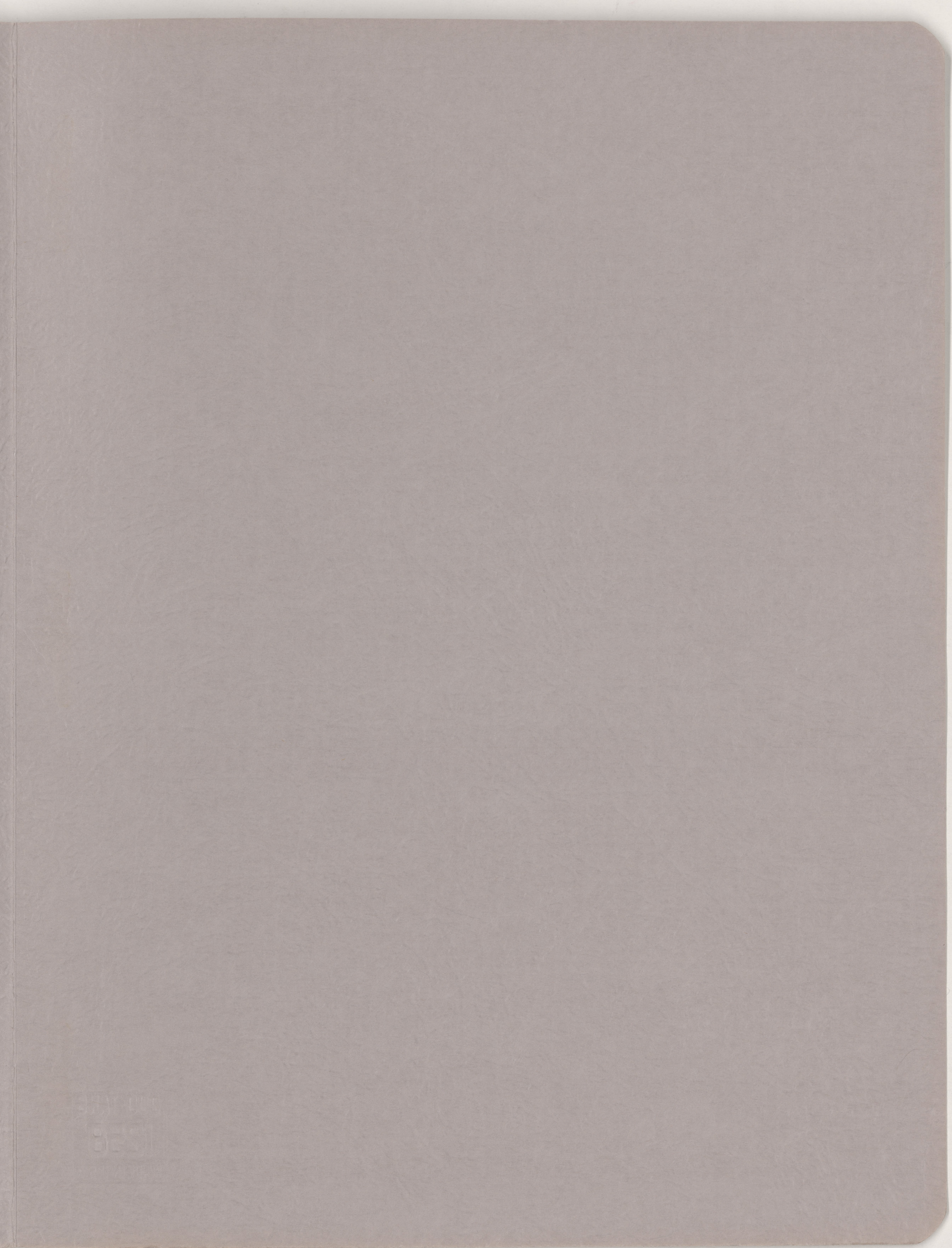
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only. Photographs etc.
which were included in
the original are included
on the microfilm copy
of the original.



Q Two prizes rec^d from Academies, for researches in Tide Levels & Currents
Career of W. Bell Dawson, D. Sc.

† Member of the Engineering Institute of Canada (MEIC)
Born, 2 May, 1854, in Pictou Nova Scotia.
Removed to Montreal, autumn of 1855, when his father, J. William Dawson undertook principalship of McGill University, there. Took six year course at Montreal High School, graduating in 1870. Final examinations accepted as matriculation to McGill in Arts. A. Dunbar Faylor was first in these exams. with school medal; Dawson second, with prize of twenty dollars in books. Entered McGill autumn of 1870; graduated in 1874 as B.A. with gold medal in Geology and Natural Science. In 1875, graduated in Engineering, as Bachelor of Applied Science, several of the subjects being the same in both faculties. In 1875 entered Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées, Paris; the training school for French Government Engineers, to which foreign students were admitted on passing entrance exam. including advanced mathematics. Took the three years course, comprising all branches of Civil Engineering; and graduated in 1878, with Diploma of Special merit. — His other degrees and distinctions are as follows: M. A., D. Sc., † Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada; ^{gold medalist} of the Institution of Civil Engineers, London, ^{with Watt gold medal} Laureate of the Academy of Sciences, Paris. Q M. Eng.

After some private practice, with an office in Montreal, was with the ~~in the~~ Dominion Bridge Co. as engineer, from 1882 to 1884; designing various types of road and railway bridges. From 1884 to 1893 was Assistant Engineer in the Canadian Pacific Railway, chiefly in bridge designing on lines then under construction, to Toronto, St. John, N.B. and re-placements ^{on the line to} Quebec. — In 1894, his main career began, in ^{commencing and} carrying on the Survey of Tides and Currents for the Dominion Government, for 30 years. ~~from its be-~~
~~gining~~ It had three branches: the record of tides, as

a basis for tide tables, and for ^{their relation} correlation with the currents; 2) the investigation of the currents on our leading steamship routes; ~~on the Atlantic & Pacific coasts~~; and 3) tide levels in our harbours. ~~for construction purposes~~, and ~~to~~ ^{The} ~~determine~~ ^{determination} of Mean Sea level, ~~which~~ became of essential value to the Geodetic Survey of Canada when it was organized later on.

These researches were carried on in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, ~~the~~ Bay of Fundy, Belle Isle Strait, and around Newfoundland; on the Pacific coast; and in Hudson Bay. New methods and applications were devised for this work, and for the calculation of Tide Tables. The results were widely published, and dispelled misapprehensions which had led to many wrecks. The information obtained has not only assisted navigation, but also the fishing industry, as well as the coal and lumber businesses especially on the Pacific coast. — Retired in 1924 from the direction of this Survey.

~~Some~~ ^{his} ~~time~~ ^{life} ~~has~~ ^{been} ~~spent~~ ^{spending} the autumn of ^{his} life in writing on Biblical subjects, including articles showing that Science and Christianity are in harmony. These articles have been published in ~~great~~ Britain, India & Australia, and China, as well as Canada and the United States; ~~and~~ ^{and} a few, including his book: "The Bible confirmed by Science," have been translated into ^{Chinese} Japanese and Korean. ~~This has also involved a wide correspondence.~~ A wide ~~correspondence~~ ^{correspondence} has also been involved in all this. (Sept: 1943.)

† and have been widely circulated as booklets or ^{when} ~~condensed~~ to leaflets.

a basis for tide tables, and for correlation with the ^{their relation} currents; 2) the investigation of the currents on our leading steamship routes; ~~on the Atlantic & Pacific coasts;~~ and 3) tide levels in our harbours. ~~for coast~~ ~~situation purposes;~~ and ~~to~~ ^{The} ^{ation of} determine Mean Sea level, of essential value to the geodetic ~~work~~ ~~done~~ ~~later on.~~

~~as well as new methods~~
~~are permanently valuable in calculating Tide Tables, and Tables for the turn of Tidal streams. These are necessary for navigation, and of great assistance to the fishing industry, as well as to the coal and lumber business especially on the Pacific coast. Retired in 1924 from the direction of this Survey.~~

~~Dr. Dawson~~
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~~and have been widely circulated as booklets or~~ ^{when} ~~condens^{ed} to leaflets.~~

enabled seamen & captains to obtain
for themselves copies of tide tables
showing ~~highs, use, fall tide~~
levels ~~& assisting~~ ~~avoid~~
ensuring safe passage of ghyr.

The Career of
Wm B Bell Dawson

Written, Sept. 1943.

Wm B Bell Dawson

SHIP CSS DAWSON called after DR. W. B. DAWSON.

The ship (CSS Dawson) was named after Doctor William Bell Dawson M.S. - M.E. D.Sc. F.R.S.C. M.F.I.C. - M.I.C.E (Eng) Canada's first expert of Tidal & current surveys & Father of Canadian Tidal & current investigations on the Atlantic & Pacific oceans - a civil engineer, a registered land surveyor & a prolific writer - he made a major contribution to Canadian marine science & to the improvement of Canadian shipping & navigation through the extensive publication of high quality tide tables & reports of currents. He developed the first coast tide levels & datum planes & tabulated sea temperatures & densities of eastern Canada.

A native of Pictou - N.S. he graduated from McGill in Montreal in 1874 with the Loran Medal in geology & Natural Science - For the next three years, he attended the Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées, Paris, France. Upon his return to Canada, he worked as a surveyor & later as a civil engineer before entering the (Govt. Service) in 1893 (in Ottawa) as an engineer in the Dept of Marine & Fisheries "to organize the survey of Tides & currents. In 1909

he was reclassified as

Superintendent of Tidal + Current Surveys

an office he held until his retirement

in 1924. Dr. Dawson was recognized

+ honored nationally + internationally

as an authority on tidal phenomena

The CSS Dawson is attached to the fleet
of the Bedford Institute of Oceanography
at Dartmouth, N.S. a division of the
Marine Sciences Branch of the Water
Group of the Federal Dept. of ~~Eng~~
Energy, Mines + Resources -

My note - I never knew what M.S. + M.E. + M.I.C.E. +

M.E.I.C. means. FRSC of course is fellow Royal
Society of Canada.

M.S. master of Science? M.E. master engineering?

2 poems by

W. Bell Dawson

Rome on Education.

(At a recent meeting of the Roman Catholic Committee of the Council of Public Instruction of the Province of Quebec, Canada, it was proposed by some lay members that ecclesiastical standing alone should no longer entitle Priests and Nuns to teach in the schools; but that hereafter they must have educational qualifications. This was voted down; all the Bishops voting against it.)

The Bishop to the Priest transmits,
In rite of Ordination,
The power to change the Elements
By transubstantiation;
And now he furthermore decrees
That vows of consecration
Upon the Priest and Nun confer
Not only their vocation,
But right and title to impart
(With his full approbation)
To all the youthful of the flock
The "Grace of Education",
Which in the un instructed mind,
(1) By simple transmutation!
(2) The ignorance to knowledge turns
(1) Without procrastination,
Beware then, Priest and Nun, beware
Of ~~weakly~~ ^{studied} preparation;
To seek to qualify yourselves
By some Examination
Will only lead to needless works
Of supererogation.
Your duty to transmit this "Grace"
Without contamination
Must keep you from the sin of doubt
By any implication,
When Bishops of the Church have made
Unerring declaration.

Ms. Libbons
894 Jarchoe de

"Pioneers in Education"

from by - W. Reed Davis

The P S A L M of the

HONEST INVESTOR.

He that dwelleth on the honest side of the Exchange,
Shall abide under the shadow of Security.
I will say of Honesty, - It is my refuge and my fortress ;
The Right, in which I trust.
For it shall deliver thee from the snare of speculation,
And from the contagion of gambling.
Thou shalt not be afraid for the Bear by night,
Nor for the Bull that roareth by day ;
For the Manipulation that walketh in darkness,
Nor for the Panic that wasteth at noonday.
The Shorts shall fall at thy side,
And the Longs at thy right hand ;
But it shall not come nigh thee.
Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold,
And see the collapse of the Corner.
Because thou hast said, - Investment is mine aim ;
And hast made Fair = dealing thy habitation ;
There shall no Failure befall thee,
Neither shall any Sheriff come nigh thy dwelling.
Thou hast despised Liquidation and Covering ;
Assignments and Receivers shalt thou trample under feet.

19th. September 1909.

William Bell Dawson.