

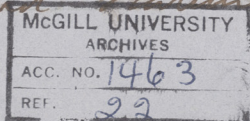
Pictou, Jan'y 2, 1855

Sir Charles Lyell,

Dear Sir,

I received by last mail your very kind letter of Nov 27, just in time to send an answer by telegraph via New York, which I trust you received. I cannot sufficiently thank you for your kindness in thinking of and for me in the matter of the Edinburgh professorship, of which I had dreamed rather than thought seriously when it was last vacant; and even now, unless with your kind assistance, I should consider the attempt hopeless; though I am not without confidence that my training under Prof Garrison and field work with yourself, and the experience I have had in lecturing and in educational affairs, would render me not unsuitable for the position, more especially since I have been obliged to study a wider range of subjects than is now usual with naturalists, and can from my own experience enter fully into the wants of students who may be pursuing or about to pursue the study of nature under difficulties. I may add that I am fully impressed with the great advantages and importance of the position, and would be disposed to improve it to the utmost of my power, as well as to carry out the improvements which Thomson was intended by Fisher, in the same spirit, though perhaps not so ably. I have therefore at once acted on the advice you so kindly give, and may state what I have done.

To save trouble I have prepared and enclosed a printed statement of my training and publications &c.,



copies of which I have enclosed to some friends in Edin.

I also enclose such certificates as, in the few days since receipt of your note, I have been able to collect. I may possibly send more by next mail. You will see that they give good testimony as to popularity as a lecturer, and general character, and I think you may say that as a lecturer and extempore speaker I am better than as a writer, at least my friends here think so.

I have forwarded your note to Sir E Head, enclosed in one from myself. Possibly you may have his answer by this mail.

I enclose letters to Cunard and C D Archibald. The former may not wish to take much trouble. The latter will do all he can. I am not sure however that his mining speculations (in the bad parts of which I had no concern) may not have lessened his influence. (I have also written to Mr Poole to send you a certificate of my coal assays)

I also enclose a note to Sir J Richardson. I do not know him personally, but I furnished him with a list of NS plants for his last work, and he has mentioned me favourably to a mutual friend.

I have been introduced to Styrie, but I fear he knows too little of me to give any certificate. By reference to Layton's Statistics of Coal and Marcou's Geological map, you will find that both, especially the latter, notice me favourably.

Though introduced to several of the Edin Professors in 1846-7, I can scarcely say that any know me, except Gregory. I have written to him, and sent some of my

papers, and have asked him for his support, or at least to mention what he knows of me.

I have also written to Messrs A. Chambers, A. Brown, J. Craig, and several others having more or less influence in Edinb.

I send copies of a few certificates to a friend in Edinb., but all the originals to you.

By a friend going to Britain, by the packet, I send a daguerrotype which if not useful in the present matter, will serve as a memento of just times. Like other things of the kind, it gives the true expression only when viewed through a lens. My age is between 34 & 35. My wife I may mention is an Edinb. lady, and has a respectable circle of relations and friends there, and in religious matters I am a Presbyterian. My brother in law, Mr Bell, is a gentleman in place, or Mr A. Brown Prince's St., will do anything in their power that you may advise them; but I do not suppose they have much influence or access to the Professor.

I enclose an advertisement of my new book. I begin with the numbers as good illustrations of modern changes, and so get on to the older works. I intend to print it in Edinb., and expect to have an estimate of cost by next mail, and to send manuscript of the following one.

I may add, of course in confidence, that I sent a treatise of about 350 pages for competition for the Burnet Prizes. It was written without any special

view to publication, and currents of a critical and scientific examination of the references in the Hebrew scriptures to Creation &c, with results, according to Huxley's views. I mention this, because the award is expected shortly, and if favourable might be a recommendation.

If receiving a useful, it would not be a very great inconvenience for me to go to London by next packet or that following, if ~~that~~ you advise me that it would be desirable and in time & of essential service.

At this season, I cannot receive a letter till after departure of return boat.

In reference to the duties of the chair, I have no doubt of my qualifications in Numerology and Geology. My weakest point is in British Geology, just where your duties was very strong. I have however a good knowledge of general Geology, and that of America, and have studied the lower forms of animal life especially the marine as they occur in this country.

Letter to Lyell 2/18/45

I am almost ashamed to trouble you with so many commissions; the many kind hints in your letter must be my excuse. If any expense be incurred for copying &c, please inform me of it, I have referred Prof Jugg to you for further information, and will be glad if you will write to him or the other professors, as I have no certainty that he will move in the matter. Affirmately thanking you, and with best wishes to Lady Lyell.

I am yours very truly
J. Dawson

P.S. Some certificates which I expected have not arrived in time for to-day's mail, I shall send them to-morrow if they arrive and hope they will be in time.

2/18/45