Moose Jaw 11th.Decr.1894

My dear Sir-

I have your favor of the 7th.instant and am much obliged to you for the interest taken by you in regard to the question of prairie fires. In the past histry of these Territories, there have doubtless been dry and moist cycles more or less marked. I have through talking with intelligent half breeds traced more or less satisfactorily the history of this part of them-covering a large extent from East to West-for a good many years and this has been the case. But generally if not always,while these periods of drought were being experienced, there were extensive fires raging over large parts of it and for years in succession,arising from feuds between the Indian tribes-as signals from one tribe to another and for the purpose of preventing the victorious tribe from following the defeated one with their ponies. My impression was that these extensive fires had largely to do with and greatly accounted for thses cycles of drought. There is no doubt whatever but that the growth of extensive belts of timber would greatly help to cause more moisture and I shall gladly avail myself of your suggestion in regard to this. These fires are causing much destruction of such timber as we would otherwise have out here. Last season,for example,some eight thousand acres of timber,I am assured,were burnt in the Cypress Hills alone, S.W.of Swift Current. The burning of the vegetable mould caused by them is one of the worst results of these fires.

This is an irreparable loss to the country. And the large tracts of sand and gravel which are thus exposed must I think do much to cause drought and excessive heat.

The question is a most serious one to us out here. And there is no doubt that since 1883 inclusive, we have been having much dryer seasons out here than those which were had here before that. These fires are doing serious injury to this Western country apart from their influence on its soil and climate as for example in the burning of this vegatable mould and I hope that the Government will be persuaded to take up the matter with energy as to the best way of putting them down.

Yours very truly

H. G. Gordon

Sir J.W. Dawson LL.D.
Montreal

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Enclosure
Albert Peck
Sept 1884

Dr Robinson 1897.