

re Edinburgh call.

(Private)

(script)

7, Heriot Row,
Edinburgh

Feb. 6. 1900

CUS417/96.14

*Prof.
Wm. S. Greenfield to Mrs.*

My dear Osler,

You will have heard of Grainger Stewart's death - which was at the end rather sudden - though he had been long ill. He is a great loss to us - personally and privately - as well as from his professorial capacity. But I need not dwell on this, especially as I am only writing a hasty line.

I don't know if you have any idea of becoming a candidate for the Chair - I know that Stewart hoped that you might be his successor, but do not know if he or anyone else ever suggested it to you. I need hardly say how great a pleasure it would be to me if you got it, but that is no reason why you should go in for it - What is of importance is that I believe you would have such strong support all round that you would be almost certain to get it, and that it would be a very great advantage to everyone here if you did. ~~get it.~~***

You are well known even to the outside world apart from the physicians &c.

As to whether it would be worth your while - that you can judge best - You would not have so much freedom - i.e. the work is more continuous and perhaps more laborious. But I suppose there is the per contra, that you could exercise a wider personal influence on the teaching of medicine &c &c. ***

Further let me put in a plea for the profession of Medicine, one rather specially touching my own point of view. At the present time, the profession of Medicine in this country is terribly hindered by the absence of a sound knowledge of pathology - and of its application to Medicine. I find it almost useless to teach pathology - for men have to forget it all to get to the level of their Medical and Surgical teaching.

And, as you know, the state of affairs in London is not much better. There is no one who is likely to stand a chance for the Chair here who has any standing in pathology. Wherefore for the sake of the future of our doctors I hope you would sacrifice something. This letter would scandalize my brethren, so I have marked it "private".

If you decide to go in, I think there will be no time to lose, though in the meantime it might be enough for you to let Fraser and perhaps one or two others know that you were going to become a candidate.

The Chair is in the hands of Curators of course - and we have no direct say - but can exert influence.

A wire would be desirable. ***

Very kind regards from my wife and myself.

Yours very sincerely,

W. S. GREENFIELD.