

Letter from E. A. SCHAFERPrivate

(Script).

University Edinburgh.

March 27, 1900.

My dear Osler,

Your cable saying your applⁿ. was withdrawn has fairly flabbergasted us. It was at Turner's instigation I cabled back to you to reconsider; for your withdrawal after everything was in train to insure your election has entirely upset the applecart. We had, or hoped we had, secured the support of practically all the electors and they were prepared to find you in the chair provided they got an application and pro forma a few testimonials, and these I would have obtained from London and sent in. Even now, if you should definitely withdraw your application I am not sure that the fact that it has been received will not enable them to elect you, in which case you could hardly do anything but accept. For be assured, if it had been legally possible you would simply have been invited, and no doubt then you could have overcome the local pressure. I quite understand the nature of that and appreciate what it does mean to struggle against. But something is due also to your friends here who to cordially welcomed the hope of having you and who have worked very hard to impress upon the peculiar electorate the absolute necessity of appointing you.

I heard today that Armstrong has been writing to you to say that you should come and see the people here and in short canvass. If he has done so he is a very silly fellow for nothing of the sort is expected or desired. I hope this has not been a factor in influencing you to withdraw your application.

Turner is awfully cut up, as he had set his heart upon your being appointed. If you can only leave us some loop hole and not absolutely and finally refuse to accept if offered you, we will still have you appointed. I do hope you will on receiving this see your way to let the application go in and cable to that effect. For you see it is too late now to find another man who can run the chair on a modern scientific basis, and we shall have to be content with Bramwell Gibson, or Wyllie who are none of them capable of doing this whatever other merits they may have. This means that for the next ten or twenty years the teaching of Medicine here will be kept back and be carried on in the old groove, while others places are forging ahead: and both Turner and I regard this as a very serious matter.

Ever yours,

E. A. Schafer.