

Amherst 21st Jan'y 1845

My Dear Sir

My chief object in writing to you at present is to say that my projected work on geology is now in the hands of the printers and that I would consider it a very particular favour if you would take the trouble to assist Mr Patterson in making out any part of the Manuscript that may not be altogether legible I have all along called the Lyell Dr Lyell you promised to me to ascertain whether this is right or not and I depend upon you for it

My Dear Sir it gives me great pleasure to learn that you are studying Theology and I seriously wish it may be with a view to the Ministry we are in great need of men of enlarged and scientific minds for we have precious few of them at present George Patterson is going to be very respectable and I am very glad of it when you are among the students try if possible to inspire them with a taste for study and information for many of them are woefully deficient I know not what the rest of your fellow students

are with the exception of the grant and I am afraid he will not do not however so much for the want of abilities as for the want of sense. Whatever else a man wants may be made up but the want of sense is hopeless.

What I have said is not my only reason for rejoicing at your determination to study Theology. I have for some years past taken a deep interest in you and though I had no particular reason for it I had some apprehension that your taste for science might mislead you. Science enables us to trace so many wonderful phenomena to physical agency that a young person is in no little danger of being induced to forget that there is a first cause and there are few branches which have a greater tendency to this than geology. Geologists are in general poor wholenom-cren very easily satisfied with arguments on the one side but very hard to please on the other. There is nothing better for counteracting a tendency to infidelity than a devout spirit than fervent and frequent prayer to God. Let me recommend this to you above every thing, and in the next place endeavour to give up all prejudices and search the Scriptures as if no one had ever searched them before. Make yourself familiarly acquainted with the original

languages and they will give you more clear views of the
meaning of the word of god in general than all the commen-
tators that ever wrote If you could get a profound and
scientific view of the Doctrines of the Bible it would be
of great service to you but I know not where to direct you
for it Every body knows that man has fallen from his
first state and although you may read and hear lectures upon
it this is all the information that they will give It is now
treated as an important part of the course arranged
you will likely be told that some things have been
cleared and others permitted and this is safely supposed
to obviate all difficulties I would advise you to learn to
read the Hebrew without the ^{vowel} points The punctuation is useful
but I do not think that Dr Mculloch was properly acquainted
with it and I am afraid the Ken is not The vowel points will
only fetter you They are not merely a guide to the pronun-
-ce but they are also a commentary and a sorry one too
For every different sense that a word has it is differently pointed
and the points therefore show the sense in which every word
is to be taken in every passage where it occurs This would have
been very useful had they been invented along with the language
and used by the writers but they were introduced by a set of igno-
-rant Rabbies in the 5th century

W. Dawson

Dear Sir yours &c Thomas Paine

us
ages

Mr William Dawson

London



John
Rowe
1748