

Pictou, January 2,
1835.

Sir Charles Lyell,

My dear Sir;

I beg leave to solicit your good offices on my behalf, as a candidate for the Chair of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh, and send herewith a statement of my scientific training, employments and publications, and certificates relating to these subjects, and also to my personal character.

You will observe that my first Systematic Lectures in Natural History were received from the late Prof. Jameson, in the winter of 1840-1, which I devoted wholly to the study of Natural Science, availing myself of all the aids that I could obtain in Edinburgh. (See certificates & tickets attached). I was then 21 years of age, and had finished my academical course in Pictou Academy (then under the superintendance of the Rev. Dr. McCulloch), including the study of Natural Philosophy and Chemistry.

Before visiting Scotland I had taken Lectures in Drawing and Perspective, had visited several of the most interesting coast sections in this country, and formed a

considerable collection, and had read extensively in geology. I was thus better prepared than most other students to profit by Prof. Jameson's lectures, which were of great service in systematizing my store of knowledge and course of study, and observation, and in instructing me in the principles and method of the determination of species.

With the geological labours in which I have employed myself since 1841, you are well acquainted, as I had the pleasure of accompanying you in your tour through Nova Scotia in 1842; and since that time it has been principally through your kindness that my papers have been brought before the geologists of Britain.

Other scientific and literary pursuits of which you may perhaps not have been informed, are mentioned in the attached statement and certificates. Among these are two courses of lectures on Natural History, delivered in two of the Collegiate Institutions of this province; the Superintendance of Education in Nova Scotia, including a tour through the New England States and New York, with the object of collecting information on

the schools of those countries, the delivery of lectures on education and agricultural chemistry, and the preparation of extended reports and statistics. I resigned the office of Superintendent in 1833 partly because it required almost continual absence from home and consequent neglect of the interests of my family, and partly because in the political condition of the province at that time, I saw little prospect of the immediate introduction of free schools supported by a government, and other improvements which I had recommended.

I may also mention under this head, the collection and determination of the plants, shells, birds and other natural productions of this province, a pass of coal & metallic ores for ^{several} persons and companies in this and the neighbouring provinces, and surveys of mineral districts. To qualify myself more fully for work of this last description, when I revisited Scotland in 1846-7, I studied chemical analysis in the laboratory of Prof. Gregory.

I have now nearly ready for the press a popular account of the geology of this and portions of the neighbouring

Refer you to the annexed certificates for evidence
that my educational efforts and public
lectures have been highly appreciated by the
people of this country.

If successful in attaining the
important and honourable position to
which I aspire, I need not assure you
that I shall exert myself to the utmost
to advance Natural History both as an
instructor and as an original enquirer,
and that nothing will give me greater pleasure
than to aid and encourage those who may
love the study of nature, and who may
properly be distressed, in isolated positions
and remote parts of the world, to con-
tend with the difficulties which I have
myself experienced. I may further assure
you that I shall do all in my power
to carry forward the important improvements
in the course and appliances of instruction,
which I know were meditated and com-
menced by the late lamented occupant
of the Chair.

I am yours very truly
and with sincere respect

J. W. Dawson

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