London 15th May 1868

My dear Sir James,

I know Principal Dawson well, and do not think it would be easy to speak too highly of him. Of his scientific attainments I do not consider myself qualified to express an opinion, but I know him to be a most interesting lecturer, and his superior administrative abilities have been shown as Principal of McGill College, Montreal, and in the supervision of the Schools connected with it, which he took hold of in a languishing and undeveloped condition, and has built up to their present influential position: in short the benefit he has been to the cause of Education in Montreal cannot be told. He is a benevolent, kind, genial, good Christian man, and fond of cultivated society, but is not a "diner-out," being a water-drinker. I have been at several evening entertainments at his house, which he always manages to make most agreeable and instructive. He is a [illegible] man and his wife is a clever woman, and like her husband much interested in doing good. He is a Presbyterian. Being a very conciliatory and judicious man (though with great firmness when necessary) he is much respected by the Professors and Students and others connected with the College, while the great variety of his attainments, his zeal and philanthropy have given him great influence for good amongst people generally.

I know Davidson was using his influence in his favor before he left Edinburgh, and would have continued to do so but for his absence.

My friend Sir William Logan now here, I had an opportunity of talking with him on the subject of Dr. Dawson's application a few days ago, and as he knows him intimately

and is much better qualified to give you an opinion on the subject of your Note than I am, I will take the liberty of sending it to him and of asking him to say a word on the subject, which, if he has time to do, I shall send you. From what I have said you will readily conclude that I consider Dr. Dawson a fit successor to the late Principal; and I confess that while in justice to Dr. D. I cannot withhold the expression of this opinion, I feel the deepest regret at the loss that Canada would sustain should he leave it.

Dr. Dawson is a Nova Scotian by birth and a little Americanized in appearance and accent, although his father was a Scotchman, and he was at college in Edinburgh. You will not understand from this that his manners are objectionable.

I was glad that Lady Alexander was able to spare even an hour to spend with my wife, and that although both invalids, they thought each other looking well.

Believe me
My dear Sir James
Ever yours
J. B. Greenshields

Sir James E. Alexander
Waterton
Bridge of Allan
Stirlingshire

Mr Greenfield (J. B.) is a Merchant in London & was many years a Partner in the very respectable house of Moffat & Co, Montreal. Mr Greenfield is a Gentleman I have the highest opinion of as a man of honor & integrity.
Mr Davidson, to whom he alludes is the Manager of the Bank of Scotland, Dublin, & was long the Manager of the Bank of British America in Montreal. Both Mr Crowell & Gentlemen Dr Dawson & Mr Dawson will be in at Florence.
his and they may not come for some time

J. E. Alexander
Wellington - Bridge - Allan
18 May / 68

Regarding
Dr Dawson

Greenshields
Letter and
No 6 1868