

Wm

Lawyer

MCGILL UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES	
ACC. NO.	2911
REF.	7219

117, Bloor St.

Toronto.

2<sup>d</sup> Dec. 1880

My Dear Dr Dawson

It has occurred to me, on reflecting on a kind offer that you made me, about interposing in the matter of the Presidency of our College, that if you did feel inclined to write to the Attorney General, The Hon. Oliver Mowat, that some good might come out of it. I will put the case before you, at any rate. It is no personal matter. If a really efficient administrator, in sympathy with unsectarian education; and having faith in the moral & religious element, as a thing perfectly compatible with a non-denominational college, — if such

is found for the president, & for one  
shall be delighted to serve under  
him; and loyally help him in all  
ways. But, writing to you in con-  
-fidence, I may <sup>say</sup> that, with our  
present president it has been a  
constant battle to get anything like  
a fair trial of the system. He  
did not believe in anything but  
Trin. Coll. Dublin, with its daily  
Chapels, saints days, &c. - That, or  
a purely secular, & truly godless college!

At present our Minister of Education  
has as his one idea the getting of  
an eminent classical scholar. To  
accomplish this he is prepared to place  
in the office of president any good  
first class Oxford or Cambridge  
classical man. I must confess I  
look forward to it with no little  
apprehension. A man from any  
of the Scottish Universities would  
have a vast deal less to unlearn.

You know Mr. Stewart, I think.  
He is one who identifies himself  
with religious work; and would  
thoroughly appreciate the importance

of the questions involved, if  
clearly put before him. As head  
of the Government also, he would  
feel the responsibility. In any  
other case I would have gone  
to him at once; but this matter  
has assumed such a personal  
aspect, owing to the way my  
name has been put forward, -  
wholly against my own will, -  
that I have felt myself powerless;  
and have purposely avoided seeing  
either Mr. Stewart or Mr. Crofts.

What I should gladly see  
would be some man of just  
weight & influence, like yourself,  
pointing out to the Attorney General  
the gravity of the choice of a man  
to preside over the Provincial  
College, as a purely national  
& non-denominational institution;  
and that - important as high  
classics undoubtedly are; - that even  
good classics is the secondary matter

as compared with the general  
conduct of the higher education of  
the province, and the moral  
elements of College life. I need  
not say that I would not wish  
my name mixed up with it.  
Understand me distinctly, that if  
a good president is found, young  
and vigorous, I shall be delighted.  
I have no craving for the post: if  
only a fit man is found for it,  
I quit that, I fear, is scarcely being  
thought of.

Now, my Dear Doctor, I should  
never have thought of suggesting  
such a thing; and if - as I  
think is most probable, - you will,  
on second consideration, prefer  
leaving the matter alone, I shall  
perfectly acquiesce in the pro-  
vendum. But as you renewed the proposal  
when parting; and so anew  
suggested to me, perhaps more  
strongly, the gravity of the issues  
involved, I have ventured to  
trouble you with this on the  
subject. Yours faithfully,  
Dan. Wilson