

31 McTavish St.,

Montreal

5<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>, 1883

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Dear J. Dawson,

I have been intending for a long  
time past to write you a few lines,  
but have been a victim of a spirit  
of procrastination, and, up to the  
present, my good intentions have  
produced no result. I hope, however,  
that this letter will reach you  
soon enough to convey to you from  
my wife and myself, the very best  
wishes of the season to you all, and  
we trust that the journeyings may  
be full of pleasure and interest,  
and how indeed can they be otherwise!  
to Mr. Dawson, Miss Dawson, & yourself.  
We hear of you occasionally, both

directly and indirectly from the papers,  
and I need hardly say that all  
such news is more welcome.

Perhaps you would prefer to  
hear a few details respecting the  
University. Prof. Pughall is winning  
golden opinions on all sides, and  
the ladies are universal in their  
praise of the excellence, both as to  
manner and matter, of the lec-  
tures he has been delivering to  
them during the past few weeks.  
The Faculties of Medicine & Arts, have  
advanced a long stride in point of  
numbers this session, and it is to  
be hoped that the advance will  
be ~~not~~ good, and that it is not  
due to the general depression which  
is said to exist on all sides. The

Medical Faculty held their Annual Dinner  
on Friday, when some interesting references  
to the recent donations of Daniel A. Smith  
& G. Stephenson, may be expected.

The Faculty of Law is the exception to  
the otherwise general progress, and  
<sup>there</sup> that only a very small number of  
new students have registered them-  
selves as devoted to the legal profession.  
Last, but by no means least, comes  
our own Faculty, and Dr. Harrington  
has doubtless already informed you  
of our present standing. We have  
now sixty-seven students in attendance,  
and I think that even Mr. Ramsay is  
constrained to admit, that we now  
more than pay our way, and that at  
the end of the session we shall have  
funds in hand. You will glad too, to  
hear that the new students are  
an exceedingly good set, they are



intelligent and gentlemen, and some  
are above the average in power of  
ability, of course, their ultimate suc-  
cess will depend upon their attention  
to work, but at present all the  
professors unite in giving them praise.  
Everything so far has gone on smoothly  
and there is every prospect that the  
same desirable condition of affairs  
will continue.

I am delighted that you were able  
to visit the Cambridge Workshops  
with James Stewart. He is a most  
able man, and it is mainly through  
his efforts that there has been so  
much done in England during the last  
five or six years with a view to estab-  
lishing better methods of technical edu-  
cation. I do not think, however, that  
it would be wise to introduce into  
the McGill régime, workshops

similar to those at Cambridge. The *Semester*,  
 here, is not at all too long for the  
 theoretical part of the profession, while  
 during the summer an embryo engineer  
 would gain far more thorough knowledge  
 of practical details, by entering such  
 workshops as the Grand Trunk or Canada  
 Pacific, than would be possible  
 by any course in a Technical school.  
 That we do require, however, & most urgently,  
 is a Testing Machine. Every school of <sup>civil</sup> engineering,  
 of any importance, both in England and  
 America, now possesses one, and the  
 benefit derived from it, as a help to  
 the more thorough insight into the  
 behaviour of materials of construction

under stress, is daily more & more appreciated. I do most sincerely hope that we shall possess one before long, in order that we might not only keep abreast with the times but also give our students opportunities of studying to the best advantage. Mr. Hurry, the Am. Engineer, was visiting me the other day, and expressed himself most strongly as to the necessity of such apparatus, and suggested that there would be ample room for it in the old Museum, i.e., the room now used for the designing. It would interfere in no way with the drawing tables, and the total cost of the machine in place, would not exceed \$5500. It would be worked by hand, so that no engine would be required, & all expense of attendance thereby saved. If in the future, we possess a



"strain" Laboratory, as I hope may some day be the case, the machine is so made as to be easily adapted to strain work. I had been promised about \$1500 towards this object, but my hopes, for the time, fell to zero, and even now I fear that I can only look for the "good time coming". It would have been a great feather for us, if we could have had one ready for the B.A. meeting, as it is a far more scientific piece of work, and gives far more correct results, than any machine yet constructed in England. I have read <sup>much</sup> more about this subject than I had anticipated, but I am more you will excuse, as to me it is full of interest.

I hope you visited Gilton & Newsham when in Cambridge. I have just received a letter from Miss Welsch,

the lady superintendent of Gorton. She  
much wants to come to Canada with  
the B.A. - newspaper, and had formed  
a provincial party consisting of a  
Miss Nias, & two Miss Herschels (Grand-  
daughters of Sir John), but it was agreed  
that she will be one of the "Excluded"  
as she has joined the association at  
Southport. She has sent me a whole  
lot of papers referring to the Gorton  
foundation, together with the bye-laws,  
constitution of the proposed new  
 ladies college in Glasgow.

I saw by this morning's Gazette, that  
the various Vice-Presidents & Secretaries  
of Sections have been nominated. I  
suggested to Bouverie, when I was in  
England, that it might be well  
for all members of the B.A. in this  
country who desire to contribute papers,  
to send them to a specified "agent"  
in Montreal, say one of the Secretaries,



& thus avoid the delay which would  
 come if they were restricted to  
 England. Money, at the time, thought  
 it would be very desirable to do  
 so, and it would certainly be of  
 advantage to "American authors."  
 We have been working very hard  
 at the excursion & railway arrange-  
 ments, which are taking far longer  
 and more trouble than we at-  
 all anticipated. We expect to  
 send our preliminary circular  
 this month. The Canada Pacific  
 limit the Rocky Mountain Excursion  
 to 150, but they also give free  
 passes to all others by any of  
 their trains and to any part  
 along their lines. The Grand Trunk

do not feel inclined to give free papers  
to any representative <sup>unmedical</sup> officers  
of the Association. They have offered  
reduced fares, but we still have  
and expect to make better terms  
with them.


I have little more of interest to tell  
you, as Montreal is jogging along in  
the usual humdrum <sup>and went</sup>  
style. Last Sunday I went <sup>to the Murray Hall to</sup> hear  
Mr. Edgar Hill, the rector of St. Andrew's  
church, lecture upon the future state,  
and he certainly rather electrified the  
Presbyterian Faculty, as well as  
many of his hearers. He went far beyond  
McDonnell in his opinions, and stated  
most emphatically that his Bible  
researches led him to the conclusion  
that the future state was resurrectional,  
and that punishment was not view-  
ed as a cast even for the most reprobate.  
At the conclusion Mr. Vicar spoke

deals these opinions on the part of  
the family, and stated that they  
were to be <sup>before hand</sup> aware of the nature  
of the lecture. Of course, Mr. Hill's  
taste, as to the delivery of such a  
lecture, in such a place, is most  
questionable, and for the purpose  
the whole affair is a topic of  
general conversation. The other  
topic, which is now absorbing much  
attention, is the failure of the  
Exchange Bank. The Bank's state-  
ment was made yesterday, and  
very <sup>many</sup> disclosures were made as to  
the mismanagement of Mr. Thompson  
the manager. Indeed, no one, not even  
his friends, have a good word for  
him, and I fear his reputation is  
altogether ruined, so as to be,  
it is said he has left the town.  
He was certainly not present at  
the meeting, & had not been heard  
of during the day at his house.



I am exceedingly sorry as I always  
gave him the credit of being an  
honest straight-forward man, &  
one who at all events had the  
courage to meet his trouble face  
to face. It is pretty certain that  
there are many others in the  
city, who gamble quite as much  
with other people's money as Gray  
has done, but so far fortune has  
favoured them, and they are  
the prosperous, so no one flings a  
stone at them.

We are very busy with our new  
house, and are wasting a lot of time  
in endeavouring to persuade the  
contractors to hurry on their work.  
What a nuisance they are! Individually  
they promise you with bland smiles,  
that all shall be finished in  
such & such a time. When you rent  
go to the scene of their operations



Not a change seems to have been made, and multitudes occur as forthcoming as to the whips & the wherabouts. They are truly a band of Philistines, and when once you get into their hands, it is almost hopeless to get out again, without their good will & kind forbearance. It is really an interesting study of character, to watch the behavior of the various contractors when they have possession of a house. The proprietor is nowhere, & amongst themselves the utmost forbearance & politeness exists, and it is generally understood that each shall be to take their time. However, I believe we are better off than

more people, and there certainly  
seems some chance of our  
getting into the house by  
May.

Great efforts are being made to  
ensure a large amount of success  
for the Carnival, and the various  
Committees are asking for and  
receiving suggestions on all sides  
which will render it <sup>practicable</sup> ~~possible~~ to  
disburse a week in the most  
attractive manner possible. I  
suppose it must be good for business,  
but I rather think the "draw"  
also make a good thing out  
of it.

I must now conclude this remembrance  
as I am sure you must be very  
tired of it. We shall be ~~be~~



glad to get you all back again,  
for Montreal seems hardly Montreal  
without you.

Please again accept the united best  
wishes & kindest regards of our  
household, including that most  
important member the Boy who is  
urgently endeavoring to say one-  
table words, and believe me to  
remain,

Yours very sincerely -

Henry J. Bowie

P.S. I am sorry to say Miss Gordon is

very dangerously ill, and very little hopes  
are given of her recovery from the present  
malaise.

Penhallur  
Dec 83