

Pictou Jan'y 26, 1844.

Dear Margaret,

In my last letter, I stated that it might be some time before I could write again. I did not however mean that I would not answer your next letter, though I must say that, having neglected to answer it for so long a time, does look like it; however, I have plenty of good excuses. In the first place, I put together the results of last summers wanderings in a paper for the Geological Society, of the reading of which I have just received an account. Then we had a contested election, which, for four weeks, kept the whole county in a perfect bubble. Our county is nearly equally divided ~~with~~ politics, and we, who call ourselves reformers, were beaten at last election. In order to prevent a like catastrophe here at this, exertion of every kind was required, and fortunately the opposite party had employed so badly their former success, and had used so disgraceful means to

maintain their supremacy, that they were deserted by many of their most intelligent followers; and, after a keen contest, defeated. During two weeks of the election, there were 4 or 500 freeholders in town every night, and we always had a room full to provide with lodgings and meals. This and talking to ignorant Highlanders, trying to convert them from their doctrines inculcated by their leaders, writing a little, and the excitement and hurry kept ^{up} during the whole affair, prevented me from attending to anything else. Then, directly after the election, a demand was made on me for a lecture to our Literary Society; and now I am requested by the Halifax Mechanics Institute to give them three lectures on geology, - which I suppose I will do, as I would require to visit Halifax - at any rate.

^{visit} All these, and many other things of less consequence, you will recollect had to be done besides attending to my proper business of bookselling; and though I can not

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not say that they prevented me from
often thinking of you, - they have certainly
delayed my letter, which is after all,
very like some peoples ^{visits} visits, occupied with
nothing except apologies for not having
come before, or apologies for having
come at all.

Another year has commenced, and
people have been rejoicing because it is a
new year. It would better become war
to be sad, because the past might have
been better spent, and the coming involves
much responsibility, and more uncer-
tainty. We have at least cause to rejoice,
and be thankful too, for the good en-
joyed in the last year, and perhaps after
all is better to go into the new one,
dancing and making merry, than
trembling because we are entering an
unknown region where evil may befall us.
I spent last new years eve in writing
a little article for a newspaper, and
remember that when I had finished,

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I thought of my dear Jan in Edinr, and tried to guess what you might have been doing, or where you were spending your New Year, but, not being able, gave it up, and went to bed.

I believe I have already told you nearly everything worth mentioning, in which I have been engaged since last letter, and though I might tell you a great many things - connected with Pictou doings, & Pictou people, they would necessarily be uninteresting to you. You have in this an advantage which I have not, for I cannot help feeling - rather affectionately towards Auld Beevie, and therefore take an interest in anything occurring there; whereas my country, not in itself so interesting, has no claim upon you; and though I should like you to have some love to Nova Scotia, I feel that this can scarcely be expected. So this wish you must attribute the long and somewhat clumsy attempt to describe some parts of it, in my last letter.

I have nearly filled my paper, and could say much more. I dare say however there is enough for ~~one~~ ^{one} epistle, though if I could speak instead of writing, I should probably waste a great deal more of your time and patience. We are all well. Sincerely wishing that the new year may be one of happiness to you and all your relations

Jan^r your most affectionately
J. W. Dawson