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Montreal. October 14<sup>th</sup> 1886

My Very Dear Rankine

Time for me three  
weeks & this my first letter! I am pained  
with regret when I think of the possibility  
of your reaching one of your parts &  
feeling disappointed at receiving no letter  
from Mother! but as our arrival  
here we have been plunged into  
writable hard work. When I tell you  
that the house having been closed for  
six months, & painted in it before we  
left & since we returned, with one  
servant, who preceded us only by three  
days, you will, without my entering

into details, know how some of Eric's  
 & my time has been occupied - but  
 we are now within our sights of  
 restored order. So to your father he  
 had a week of sharp illness, the day after  
 our arrival a Chill - the weather being  
 icy cold - brought on diarrhoea & at the  
 same time he was overwhelmed by work  
 that had to be attended to - extras of all  
 kinds come pressing in - in addition to the regular  
 strong current. This week the "Teachers Con-  
 vention" is on hand, of which he is President.  
 Some people of importance from Ontario  
 are here, also two ladies (Miss Freeman &  
 Mrs. Burnout) from Wellesly College, Mass: &  
 all are to dine with us tonight. Miss F. is  
 the Educational Principal, Mrs. Burnout has  
 endowed the Coll., giving \$800 - 000 & she  
 herself acts as business manager. Later  
 this evening we entertain the Convention



3  
together with three hundred citizens  
(500 in all) in the Pitts Redport Museum.

So truly the "good old man" wins  
his fame, & any elation that may have  
come of the distinguished honours heaped  
upon him in England must, by this time,  
be pretty well ground out again. It  
is however better to pale fighting a good  
fight than to live a lingering death, as  
did our dear old friend Mr Leach, who  
passed away from earth yesterday.

In regard to Birmingham I have wholly  
trusted to your getting accounts of it from  
the public papers sent to you. By far the  
largest majority of these agree that the  
meeting was a most successful one &  
the paper read of importance & interest. George  
on the "Rocky Mountains" was well received  
& warmly praised, altho' the mistake of its  
being read in the geological instead  
of the Geographical section occurred.  
No town ever did more to welcome or promote



the work of the B. A. than Birmingham.  
 For ourselves both as regards private  
 hospitalities & Public Receptions, royalty  
 itself could not have received greater  
 Courtesy or more honour. The Martineau's  
 with whom we staid, lived about  
 2½ miles from the Centre of meetings &  
 sections, but their large Carriage was placed  
 at our disposal for the ten days so that  
 we were spared all fatigue in getting  
 to places. In going to the evening Receptions  
 & lectures, when the streets were blocked  
 with Carriages, the President's & Mayor's Car-  
 riages were allowed to drive direct to the  
 doors of the halls - quite a boon as we  
 were at a dinner party every night & papa  
 having to take the Chair or receive the guests  
 this arrangement prevented his feeling mor-  
 row by detention. Eva was much admired  
 & received bouquets of flowers, perfumes, fruit &c.  
 I was presented with a very large photo of papa



5. We had a truly delightful time for  
altho' your father had responsibilities &  
hard work there was pleasant stimulus  
of multitudes of appreciative on-lookers.  
& we saw & heard a great deal <sup>that</sup> both  
instructive & beautiful. But life cannot  
go on long in unchecked luxury & adu-  
lation, the chafing Changeable Atlantic  
had to be crossed altho' it presented  
a smooth face for the first day so that  
we got our things settled before we  
ourselves became unsettled - got upon  
the whole our baggage too had its pleasing  
all were not stormy days & there were  
many pleasant people among the 127  
passengers - it was so delightful to be  
coming home to be welcomed by Florence  
& Will & to find their boy a fine well-grown  
child. Three days later Anna, Bernard &  
their little folks arrived from St. Andrews



all in good health & then we had a  
 grand - partack? but I advised that  
 your box should be kept till a later  
 date that they might the more distinctly  
 & fully enjoy your kindness, so when  
 George came down the following Saturday  
 Anna unpacked it & presented each with  
 your presents when they all heartily ap=  
 preciated your loving tokens of remembrance.  
 Mrs Carpenter asks me to send you her  
 loving grateful thanks. Miss Lunn & Miss  
 Campbell I suppose intend to write them  
 selves. The Mc Donalds are the members  
 do their present awaits their return. A Certain  
 Crab, <sup>long suppressed</sup> that ~~has~~ fallen to my care which  
 I consider a trust till you come to reclaim  
 it. The opium pipes too are yours, but I have  
 them exhibited, along with S<sup>d</sup> Indian pipes,  
 as a warning to all who will receive it  
 to avoid such savage barbarisms.  
 Your Chinese figures are put away beside these



you previously sent, to be kept with care till you come to furnish for yourself. My house is now most fully equipped. I have not any need.

you heard I think of <sup>Miss</sup> Smith's engagement to Lord Adelaide's youngest son. The marriage was fixed to take place on the 29<sup>th</sup> of Sep. & not more than ten days before that date it was broken off as they could not agree about the settlement. We are very sorry for the <sup>1<sup>st</sup></sup> especially Sir W. he is just the man to feel deeply the mortification of a false trust.

Yesterday I was at the marriage of Miss Bagg. to Rev. Canon Mills, of Trinity Church. All concerned seem highly satisfied with the suitability of the union. he is a handsome man & gentlemanly looking.

During the voyage & as I have come & gone since my return I have been closely observing Canadians & their ways, & trying to note the differences between them & English people, with the object of judging which of the two



Countries would be the most agreeable to have to do with from a medical point of view. If one reckons from the lowest grade upwards, to a certain height, people are much the same, but the whole English upper classes being unrepresented here, the absence of their influence, together with the unpolished sunning of a new country, seem to me, to have what is our uppermost class with a decidedly lower standard of manners & general tone. Limiting oneself to the English speaking population, Montreal is, besides, a mere village compared to the larger cities of England or the U. S. & has one of the usual disadvantages of a small place in the gossipy interest it takes in their neighbours affairs. The street of the town too strike even to me as having a most untidy neglected appearance, indeed the entire Civic management is at fault. I would not write in this way from personal feeling because it is astonishing.



to myself how soon one conforms  
to their surroundings & can be equally  
happy (i.e. if not altogether destitute of  
resources within oneself. Like the weather,  
there are compensations in all varieties.  
I think however there cannot be many  
places where the medical staff holds  
a more respectable standing nor show  
their desire for progress more generally,  
by the numbers who give up their practice  
for four or six months to visit hospitals  
& schools of medicine, there to correct any  
felt deficiency. Dr Stewart & Rattan <sup>Prof. of</sup><sub>A.</sub>  
McC, returned at the same time we did from  
making a tour of several hospitals, & Dr  
Blackader has gone to spend this winter  
in Vienna. We are inclined to believe  
that another high-class medical man  
might edge in but not to the point he might



attain (in time) in one of the large  
cities.

Anna, chiefly at George's solicitation  
& at his expense, has made a very rare  
move in her life - viz: gave up & left  
husband & family for the sake of a  
little change & rest, to pay visits to  
Sophie Labatt (alias Browne) in London.  
Ont: & to Sybil Wilson. Toronto. I think &  
hope that it will do her much good to  
have a short pause from her ceaseless  
toil & to view the mental & moral "landscape  
air", from a distance from the fray. She  
left on Monday last & a postal Card from  
Toronto tells that this first part of her journey  
has been comfortably performed. She proposes  
to remain from two to three weeks.

Now the Ministers of Education luncheon with  
us at 1<sup>o</sup> Clock & it is within five minutes of  
that time so, adieu adieu, I must stop, but  
not before assuring you of my dear warm love  
& be a darling good-bye & the peace & blessing of your Mother