

Sir William Dawson was an eminent controversialist, and was competent to give as good as he got. By a sly turn of phrase, by a certain indirect implication, or even by a slight bitterness of speech, he was often able to turn a position which looked difficult to face.

These qualifications for argument were abundantly developed in those numerous excursions which he made into regions with which science has nothing to do, but he became really formidable in defence of the scientific positions which he adopted. The controversy over the *Eozoon Canadense* is a case in point. This humble material thing was put forward by him as the earliest example of life which was known to biologists, and by his opponents the innocent mass of rock was "assailed with as much bitterness as if it were a personal enemy." Probably the animus was directed as much against the discoverer as against the thing itself. What the present state of the case may be, I do not undertake to say, but certainly on account of the disturbance which it created affords instructive and amusing reading, even in these days when we have more important things to bother about.

Up to the year 1892, Sir William Dawson, being then in his seventy-second year, "felt strong and well, and was not aware of any failure in energy." In September of that year he suffered from an attack of pneumonia, "the friend of the aged." After addressing to the students who were "ever his dear young friends," a letter which was suffused with love and vibrating with feeling, he spent the winter in the South. On the 26th of May following, he sent a formal communication to the Governors resigning the Principal's post, which he had occupied so worthily and so long. Then he repaired to his little cottage at Metis. In the autumn he returned to Montreal, and took up a private residence on University Street, within easy reach of the Museum and Library, where he hoped to spend a few more years "in the study of God's wondrous works as well of His Word."

Six years were so spent, and recent students will remember the venerable and bowed figure, clad in the long silk gown and academic cap. This was Sir William Dawson, pursuing his avocation with all the enthusiasm of youth, going to and from library and museum under the arching eims and spreading maples of the Campus, which he had caused to be planted forty years before. Students who knew him not in the days of his strength would pause as if for a benediction, and the gracious uplifting of the hand, the gentle inclination of the head, the sweet voice were rarely wanting. The end came on the 19th of November, 1899.