Montreal, Sept. 22,
1871.

Dear George,

I have been reading Pratt's argument about the thickness of the earth's crust, and I think it very good and conclusive in so far as it proves the crust to be very thick, but I dont think the exact or even approximate thickness could be calculated, since the difference of the observed and calculated progression is only .256 of a second, and such a quantity is almost too small to base calculation upon, when one considers the irregular distribution of land and water, and even the difference of specific gravity of

rocks in different mountain ranges would make some small difference to the calculation.

We have now begun our course at college, and therefore I have not so much time. I am taking the honour mathematics again this year and there are three lectures a week in that, but I have read up a little more than half of the Greek for this year during last vacation; i.e. half of the Greek for before Xmas & half of that for after.

I intend to take the course in engineering next year, and there is an arrangement made that students passing the Intermediate exams: can take the science course & with French and German, and get their B.A. at finals. The Engineering and other science courses extend over three years, the first year in the Engineering being devoted to mathematics ordinary and honour of

the first year of Arts, English, and ~~Comm~~ chemistry, and French or German if wished. The second year work comprises the ordinary & honour mathematics of the second year and part of those of the third and ~~the ordinary maths of the second botany English~~ botany & Logic of the second.

The third year is not "cut out." These courses are in the mornings & then after Oct 1. Classes in the afternoon begin in Mecanical Drawing & Use of Instruments in the first year & Drawing & surveying in the ~~third~~ second.

Then if a student enter the second year of this course from the second year of Arts he takes ~~#~~ part of the Maths. of the third yr. and the use of instruments &c. of the first year of the other course, and gets exemption from the Maths of the second year which he has done before.

But I am talking very lengthily about these matters which perhaps you don't care much about

but still it gives you an outline of what I, at present, intend to do next year.

We are having pretty cold weather now with frost every few nights, but it is generally fine.

There is nothing particular going on here, except a Japanese show to which Eva & R. are going tomorrow and a Horticultural exhibition, yesterday.

Believe me your affectionate brother William.

Dear George

I suppose this will reach you about the time of your return to London and ~~[illegible]~~ [illegible]. I give you a little commission, viz to ask Dallas when you see him to send me a few authors copies of my little paper on Devonian fishes. I want to give copies to Newberry & others interested. I

Dec. X