

Acc. 276

May 20, 1873

Tuesday

Dear George

I have just been going over my Linnaeas with Gould & Binney's book, when I came upon a curious species which is found at the Lake of the Woods. and this reminded me of the letter I should have written to you, & so I have come to write one.

The Linnaea I am speaking of is called L. decollata, and the specimen described is was discovered at Unity, Me. so that it appears to be rare. This is a tracing of it from the book; you see it is very wide mouthed.



By the way, you must not forget the conchology of the regions you pass through. I hope you will get quite a number of land-shells; look out for *Helix hortensis*, & see if you can find a specimen. I would very much like to know of what variety it is of out there. I'm afraid I've got quite imperious on the shell question, but you must excuse me.

A letter came from Germany today marked "Breslau", & had quite a collection of stamps on it. There were  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 1, 2, & 5, "Deutsche Reichspost", the ones with the figures at the lower corners, you know. Not the "Deutsche Postzeitung" with the figure in the centre.

You will see a short account of the accident at the Intercolonial mine, in the

"weekly gazette": It now appears from the inquests, that the mine was kept well ventilated during the late strike, and that the immediate cause of the explosion was, that the Company refused to pay a man named R. McLeod a higher wage for picking the coal, & allowed him to use powder. As he is one of the survivors he gives all the details. His locality was a dangerous one, and the third shot he fired lit the gas. I dare say the rest of the details will be in the next "Gazette".

If you find that the "Gazettes" do not come, or that they are irregular please let me know at once and I will see about it.

We heard from Papa today & he will be now in Pictou

or at any rate will have been there; ~~and~~ he went by the St. John & then by rail to Truro, along the lately finished part of the Intercolonial.

Mr Scholl to whom you wrote about the gas burner has replied, sending his price lists. They are £1.4 for 3 doz & £4 a gross.

Rankine has gone to the great Circus today, which advertized itself on a whole page of the "Gazette."

The weather is still cool (ie. the air is); and extremely dry. Things are making a little progress however. The dandelions at are all in bloom

I remain your  
affectionate brother

William

P.S. I have just received your letter about the aurora and I am very glad that you saw it. I forgot to mention that after the north & south arches were formed a third appeared across the centre of the sky from east to west before the radial arrangement of the streamers took place. I don't quite feel prepared to answer all your bold suggestions or inquiries just at present, but I suppose the dark line from east to west that I have sometimes observed (although not in this last aurora)

may be due to the ~~the~~ true arrangement of the streamers being in parallel arches, east and west, and only apparently radiating. This may also explain the reason why the focus is always in the zenith.

The two stars you mark are  $\alpha$  &  $\beta$ .

I should think that the moon being all dried up would be a bad conductor & not have currents circulating round it, but it still might have electricity in it or on it, I suppose. However perhaps I will be better able to discuss such matters when we have finished our course on electricity which is going on now.

Yours truly,

William