

McGILL UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES
ACC. NO. 2211/29
REF. 31

McGill College.
Montreal.

Nov 5, 1840

My dear Sir,

Since I wrote
a little note about the
cents I had sent I saw
with much surprise a report
of your paper in the Civic
file at the end of which
appears the astonishing
statement that Pottolant's
Soprin is an Alga! Un-
less this is a mere
blunder of the printer
I shall be glad to learn
what grounds there are
for such a supposition.

your part. Surely you have
not mistaken, after my
caution, the granular
pieces with interminous pieces
fibres into which the fibres
of the larger specimens are
disintegrated, for the true
structure. That intricate
structure I have fully un-
ravelled by comparison of
the well preserved trunks.
In advance however of
any explanation I need
just mention (1) that
it seems rash to suppose
that large trunks with
well formed woody roots
and large branches can

be algae, (2) That the
mode of occurrence of the
trunks in sandstones with
land plants and no
marine fossils precludes
such a supposition (3) That
nothing but very durable
woody stems could have
been preserved without
flattening ^{& with the leaves perfect} in such coarse
beds. Only Conifers occur
in such circumstances in the
Carboniferous & Devonian (4)
I have been able to find
no alga whether great or
small and I have long ago
dissected and examined all
within my reach composed
of plant tissues throughout, with

Curran
Staff

trunks of growth and a
distinct bark (in Petalotus
as in Campes the latter occurs
as hard coal)

In the best preserved
trunks, one in my collection
and one in Mr W. L. L. L.

— The former 5 inches in diameter
the latter about a foot,
the whole substance is porous
without even a pith.

However mysterious
the structure of this plant
I can assure you that
it must have grown on
land, and must have
been a stump, woody, decol-
oree, growing in the manner
of an exuberant; all which I hope
you believe, notwithstanding the
opinion in the newspaper report
July 1850
W. L. L.