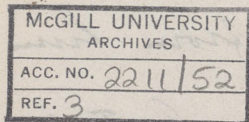


(Monday)

May 8, 1876.

W. Dawkins



My dear Father,

I have received yours of the 20th April, & wrote immediately to Mr. Guest to ascertain where Prof. Huxley was at present. I learn in reply that he is now in Edinburgh at the University. I have just finished a letter to him mentioning when I will be in London, & asking him to have the specimens ready for me. I expect, too, to hear from him soon, as I have asked him to answer my letter as soon as possible; and if there is going to be any difficulty about it, I can easily leave here earlier than I otherwise

would, in order to have a little more
time in London. I saw the Inspector
last week, and obtained from him
the permission to pass my last exam-
ination on Saturday the 20th, so that
I could even leave on Saturday evening
if I choose.

I have also purchased the eye-
piece & object-glass which you wrote
about. They are carefully done up, &
will, I hope, prove satisfactory.

When I saw the Inspector, I also
asked about the missions for this year.
He told me that I would find a list
of them in the library, together with
details in regard to them (written in
a note-book which accompanies the list).
He said that I could choose from
among them and make my application
to him in writing when I had decided

He also mentioned that I could go
or not just as I pleased, & whenever
it suited me. All that he does is to
recommend me to the Engineer in charge
of the works. I looked over the details
carefully and have decided on a mission
which I think will be very profitable
if I have time to go upon it. There
were several railways with tunnels
bridges, &c. in process of execution. One
or two were common roads, one of which
was in Haute Savoie and might be in-
teresting. Most of the hydraulic missions
relating to navigation canals & harbors
are given to the 'élèves' of the 2^e Classe
(or second year) as they are supposed to
be better able to profit by them. There
was one, however, in this line which
I thought would be the most profitable
of all, as it presented particular advan-
tages & also gave an opportunity of seeing

several different kinds of work. It is
on the Canal de l'Est in the Department
of the Meuse (in the east of France)
A canal is being made there to cut off a
number of elbows in that river, on
which there are several locks & basins
besides 10 bridges which cross the canal
and a bridge on which the canal itself
crosses a valley. Also in the two de-
partements on each side, there are
extensive repairs and alterations on the
same line of Canal, which would be
something to fall back upon if in case
of a less interesting period occurring
on the main works. Verdun is the
centre of operations. - I mention this now
in order that you may be able to compare ad-
vantages here with those in Canada; but at the
same time it need not interfere with arrange-
ments which you have made, as I should
much prefer to work there; especially as I hope
to make something out of it. My services ought
now to be worth something; & I should at least
like to be able to meet the expense of coming
out & returning.

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