

86 Bd de Port Royal

Monday, Jun. 7, '78

Acc. 976

Thoughtful
work

My dear George,

You speak in your letter of No. 29th of the prospects I may have, and the choice that I would make in regard to work when I return leave the Ecole des P. & B.

I hardly take into consideration the alternative of anything being offered me on this side, as I do not see any chance of it. The last country to look to is France as the field is already fully occupied except in industrial Engineering. In England there might be openings, but a person in my position would be most likely to be shipped off as resident Engineer to

some distant part of the world, and there might or might not be guarantee for further employment. In Switzerland Belgium or Holland there might be a chance of success, but I do not know how one could make ^{himself} ~~themselves~~ known there, or find out what chances there are. So far as I can judge, the remuneration that one could expect over here is very small, and would be so for a long time; so that in these countries if one does not make up one's mind to settle permanently there is not much hope of finding anything to do. If I wish to live in Canada, I do not see that I would be the gainer by spending several years on some piece of work on this side. Now that I have finished my studies, my practical studies experience must be gained in the country I mean to reside in, as the whole tenor of the practice of different countries begins at once to diverge, whenever the

basis of general principles is left behind. There is much more uniformity also ^{among} between the different countries of Europe than between it and America; and necessarily so, as the conditions are essentially different in many important respects. It is true, the choice is open; but I prefer my own side of the Ocean, as I feel that I am better adapted for it, and would find much more interest in working there than in foreign countries.

England would perhaps have more to offer than in the way of inducements than countries on the Continent, but I think what I have said would apply equally to it also. There would be little advantage in taking any employment from any Engineer there unless with the intention of making it a permanent. I admit there might be a faint chance of my accepting an offer from of work in England or under an English firm of Engineers if the

offer were a wonderfully good one; but I am rather inclined to think that second thoughts would prove final in regard to it. As I say, there is little chance in England itself especially for one not belonging to the country, and I certainly would never think of accepting work in Russia or the Central America.

I have tried to think calmly of these alternatives, as it is right to do so; I must not speak strongly of my preferences or feelings, but I will content myself with saying that the mere thought of remaining over here instead of returning in the spring is enough to make my blood run cold. There is no doubt a certain charm in thinking that the choice of the whole world lies before me, but when it comes to the stern reality of the consequences of one's choice, it is a very different matter.

In regard to Canada, I should perhaps take an offer of employment

on the Pacific Railway into consideration, although it is not one that I should prefer. I have no doubt that the work would be interesting, but I should think the other provinces of Canada & the Eastern States would offer a large enough field without taking me so far away.

I may be detained a week or two after the session closes before receiving the Diploma as there is often a delay in getting it. Indeed it is often after Christmas time before it is first coming and I hear that the last year's students have not got theirs yet. We also receive a set of drawings leaving the School for which we pay the cost price (£140). I wish to get both these & the Diploma before leaving, and would wait a couple of weeks rather than come without them. It might be of advantage to have the Diploma with me, so I will do my best, but I will not be surprised if there is considerable delay about it, in which case I of course would not wait.

I have finished the Paper on the Eastern Canal which I have been writing and I will not fail to draw up an estimate of the time it has taken in order to ~~be~~ better understand what I am attempting if I begin work of that kind again. I wrote to the Sec^y of the Inst. C. E. to ask if the drawings I send with it will be returned, as I cannot part with them without a written promise to that effect. The answer is reassuring, & I ~~do~~ am told in answer to other enquiries that Students papers are occasionally printed in the Proceedings when they are considered of "sufficient value & interest;" and further: "As your Essay will be descriptive of a work actually in progress or carried out, provided it be carefully prepared, I think it stands a fair chance of being included in the Proceedings. As a rule, many of the Students papers are derived from published information and are the result rather of reading

than of observation and experience".

If any paper is fortunate enough to meet with this success, I will profit more by it than I had counted on, even if I obtain one of the Premiums for which it is destined to compete. I have now only to write out English covers in which to enclose each drawing. I will commence this after our Examination is over. It is on Thursday & comes off on Thursday.

I have not yet heard from you what you think I had better do in regard to the Exhibition. I thought of applying for the work of reporting on the Engineering exhibits. I should like to hear from you soon, as next month I shall commence preparing my other applications. They are to be, ~~first~~, to Mr Page for Canal work to the Quebec Harbour Commissioner to Mr Fleming in regard to the C.P.R. There with the chance which Toronto holds out, and which Father is looking after, are the only things

I get know of. I must decide first
in regard to the steps I mean to take in
reference to the Paris Exhibition, as
it influences the time at which my
other applications should be sent.

Mr. Page told me that three months was
a sufficient delay to allow for an
answer. I do not forget Mr. Boyle's
offer, which I think I have mentioned
to you, but I can hardly afford to
wait; so that if there is not some def-
inite work on hand in the spring, I
must give up the idea of accepting what
he offers me, at least for the present.

I hear that the Tunnel between N.Y.
& Jersey City is shortly to be commenced.
I should be glad of information about it.

I am invited to dine with the Di-
rector of the School next Tuesday. I hope
I shall be able to ~~to~~ represent our Class
without proving "too insufficient," as
they say here.

Have you heard that three gases have
been liquified? Oxygen at Geneva, Dec 31,
& Nitrogen & Hydrogen at Paris a few days
later. I have no details yet.

With love to all, I remain your
affectionate brother William.