

Penola, 1.6.1865

W.H. Archer, Esq.,

Dear Sir,

I think I owe you a letter but you asked me for some hair and herewith you have the first instalment. The animal is, or was, a small flying squirrel (opossum mouse they call him) and is rather rare. The head, you perceive, is not there, but that is the fault of the Goth who skinned it and who when I saw what he had done I felt more inclined to strike than to thank. Did you think I hit Dr. B.<sup>i</sup> too hard? Have you finished my ponderous two volumes yet? Do you want microscopic fossils? Will any common hair as that of the opossum and native cat do you? Did you remind J. Smith<sup>ii</sup> of my letter? Will you entertain the notion of photographing to my letterpress in re Bryozoa? Did you like my book on the whole? There's a bundle of enquiries for you so you can keep my letter before you when you write and answer them. I am hard at work on my work on the Physical Geography of Australia<sup>iii</sup> but my health is really indifferent. But still I will make it such a book for the idea is grand. In a similar spirit to Lord Nelson, tho in different words, I say, "The Butter Shop or Westminster Abbey".<sup>iv</sup>

Very kind regards to Mrs. Archer and believe me,

Vy try yrs

J.E. Tenison Woods

Would it be too much to ask you to let me have a look per post of "The Stream of Life" in which my Geo. Book is noticed, and might I trouble you further for about 100 glass slides for transparent objects and a dozen wooden ones for opaque Do., not the thin covers but the slides. If you can get them hand them to Dwight and send the account to me. I would not trouble you if I knew where to get them.

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John Ignatius Bleasdale (1822-1884) a Catholic Priest arrived in Melbourne in 1851. Prominent in the Church, in scientific circles and in public life his many offices included organiser for the Intercolonial Exhibition 1866-67, trustee of the Museum, Public Library and National Gallery, member of many boards connected with health and education, President of the Royal Society of Victoria, secretary to Archbishop Goold and in 1874 Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Melbourne. He was an important contributor to the Australian Wine Industry and migrated to California in 1877 after his health failed. (A.D.B. Vol. 3, pp. 183- 185 and T.J. Linane *From Abel to Zundolovich*, Vol. I pp. 26-27.)

<sup>ii</sup> James Smith (1820-1910) an experienced and able journalist migrated to Victoria in 1854. He joined the staff of the *Argus* in 1856 and contributed leading articles, literary reviews and dramatic criticisms. For a time he edited the *Australasian* but from 1863-68 he was Parliamentary Librarian. The first to suggest the foundation of a National Gallery he exerted a great influence on art as critic and as trustee of the Public Library, Museums and National Gallery. He wrote articles for most of the

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important Melbourne literary journals, was a much sought public lecturer and worked for the intellectual and cultural elevation of the colony. (A.D.B., Vol. 6, pp. 145-146)

<sup>iii</sup> This work as a book was not published. It is mentioned in an article on Woods and his writings in *The Australian Monthly Magazine*, Vol. IV May, 1867. "Mr. Woods is now engaged in a complete and popular resume of the physical geography, geology, mountain and river systems botany, natural history and climatology of Australia. Some of the most celebrated colonial geologists have promised their aid by affording information ... " However, by May, 1867 Fr. Woods was in Adelaide as Secretary to Bishop Sheil, Director of Catholic Education and involved with Mary Mackillop in establishing the Sisters of St. Joseph. His writings for some years were very few.

<sup>iv</sup> At the Battle of Cape St. Vincent Nelson led the boarding on to the Spanish ship "San Nicholas" exclaiming "Westminster Abbey for Victory". Robert Southey, *The Life of Horatio, Lord Nelson*, London, J.M. Dent & Co. 1898, p. 115.