



CHICAGO JOURNALS



Letter from Mr. Sydney D. Townley

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Source: *Publications of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific*, Vol. 8, No. 48 (April 1, 1896), pp. 85-86

Published by: [The University of Chicago Press](#) on behalf of the [Astronomical Society of the Pacific](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40670872>

Accessed: 22/05/2014 00:46

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NOTICES FROM THE LICK OBSERVATORY.

PREPARED BY MEMBERS OF THE STAFF.

LETTER FROM MR. SYDNEY D. TOWNLEY.

A letter received from Mr. SYDNEY D. TOWNLEY, a member of the A. S. P., formerly HEARST Fellow in Astronomy at the LICK Observatory, may be of general interest to members of the Society.

“Jaegerstr. 27, IV, BERLIN.

“*Dear Professor HOLDEN:*

“It has occurred to me that I might possibly be of service to American astronomers while abroad by offering to look for old books for them. I have made a number of excellent purchases for myself. I am going to Leipzig, Munich, etc., in the spring, so that I shall have an opportunity to search for books there as well as in Berlin.

* * * * *

“I am hearing lectures by Professors FOERSTER, LEHMANN-FILHÉS, and SCHEINER, and have some work in spectrum analysis at the Potsdam Observatory. Please give my congratulations to Mr. PERRINE on the discovery of his comet, and with kindest regards to all at Mount Hamilton, believe me, etc.,

“S. D. TOWNLEY.”

METEOR OF JANUARY 4, 1896 (Minturn, California).

On January 4, 1896, at 6:48 P.M. (I think that was the exact time), I had the good fortune to witness another beautiful meteor. I was two miles southeast of Merced at the time. The general direction of the flight was about the same as the one of '94; it was visible fully five seconds, and it turned night into day. I expected to see some account of it in the papers, but as none

appeared, I concluded it was purely a local affair, though at the time, from its brilliancy and height of starting, it seemed as if it must be visible to all the country.

FRANK H. WEBSTER.

MINTURN, CAL., February 2, 1896.

BRIGHT METEOR OBSERVED AT NAPA, FEBRUARY 2, 1896.

“NAPA, February 2, 1896.

“Dear Sir:—My wife and I observed a bright meteor this evening at 6:33 (about). Its course was from about R. A. $23^{\text{h}} 30^{\text{m}}$, Dec.— 15° to R. A. $3^{\text{h}} 20^{\text{m}}$, Dec.— 28° . It was moderately bright. It moved in a very slow and leisurely fashion, taking at least thirty seconds before it disappeared. No report was heard. The path was of the same size and brilliancy throughout.

“Respectfully,

To Dr. E. S. HOLDEN.

“H. D. CURTIS.”

THE TROUVELOT ASTRONOMICAL DRAWINGS, WITH DESCRIPTIVE MANUAL, BY E. L. TROUVELOT. CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS, Publishers, 153-157 Fifth Avenue, New York.

This series consists of fifteen large colored plates, about thirty-six by thirty inches, with a descriptive manual. A private letter from the publishers informs me that they have reduced the price of the very few sets on hand to ten dollars, delivered in New York. Some of our members may like to know this.

E. S. H.

EXPLOSION OF AN AEROLITE IN MADRID (FEBRUARY 10, 1896).

“An aerolite exploded above this city to-day. There was a loud report, followed by a general panic. All buildings were shaken, and many windows were shattered. According to the officials of the Madrid Observatory, the explosion occurred twenty miles above the Earth.

The sun was shining clearly at the time of the explosion, and the only thing visible in the sky was a white cloud, bordered with red, which was traveling rapidly across the heavens, leaving behind it a train of fine white dust. When the explosion occurred, the populace believed it was an earthquake, or a sign of divine wrath.