

J. Thomas

Philadelphia Dec. 11 1871

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Dear Sir

I hope you will
pardon me - an utter stranger
to you - for thus presuming
to trespass upon your time.
I will state my object as
briefly as possible

I am engaged at
present in editing a small
cyclopaedia (to consist of
3 vols. of about 1200 pages

each) - to which several
of the most distinguished
men in the United States
have promised to con-
tribute* - among others
I may name Professor
W. D. Whitney and Dr
James Hadley of Yale
College; Professor J.
R. Lowell ^(the poet) and Prof.
Francis J. Child of
Harvard University;
and Prof Stephen Alex

*A number have already sent in
their contributions

* I would refer you to any of these gentlemen for my character - It was Dr. McCosh's suggestion that I addressed me to write to you.

under, Prof. Guyot and Dr. McCosh of Princeton.* - I should esteem myself most fortunate and honoured if I could add your name to the list.

I have not yet been able to find a competent and suitable person to write a general article on geology (Prof. Dana has engaged to write

a short article for my
work - but his ^{feeble} health
absolutely forbids him
to undertake anything
extensive) I have
been greatly pleased
with your Geological
Sketches in the "Pisone
Hour" - not merely with
the ^{mastery} ~~great~~ knowledge of
the subject which they
evinced - but also with
the reasonable and com-

did spirit with which
they seem to me to be written.

Would it not be possible for you—who have the subject so entirely at your command—to abridge or condense that article to a space not exceeding 10 or 15 pages of the "Leisure Hour"? I am aware that this is a case where a writer must experience in all

its difficulty l'embar-
ras de la richesse.

I regret to say
that - my means being
quite limited and my
contributors very numerous -
it is not in my power
to offer you in the way
of compensation, anything
that could be an in-
ducement to you to un-
dertake the task in ques-
tion - or to compete with

P.S. I am aware your time must be very much
occupied - I could however if you desired it
1872 give you the preparation of your article
till September

what I know your writings
must command in other
places - The most I
have yet offered to any
of my contributors is four
dollars a page of mat-
ter equal to a page
of Appleton's "New Ameri-
can Cyclopaedia" - besides
in addition to a complete
copy of the work ^(which will be handsomely illustrated) when
finished. - I am assured
that Messrs Appleton
in no instance gave

more than two dollars per
page of ^{printed} matter. - I would
gladly give you besides
a copy of the work - six
dollars per page (of the ^{equal to that}
"Leisure Hour" ^{or of Appleton}) - and feel
that if you contributed
to my work - you were
conferring on me a very
great favor - Hoping to
hear from you at your
convenience - I am
with the highest ^{respect}
very truly yours
J. W. Dawson Esq. J. Thomas

* Which is a little larger (tho' I think not much) than a page of Appleton if we count the matter