

LENSFIELD COTTAGE, CAMBRIDGE, 27 MAY, 1887.

DEAR SIR WILLIAM DAWSON,

YOUR LETTER TO ME RESPECTING AN ENDEAVOUR TO BRING ABOUT A GENERAL AGREEMENT AMONGST ENGLISH-SPEAKING GEOLOGISTS REGARDING CLASSIFICATION, NOMENCLATURE, AND MAPPING WAS PRINTED FOR THE USE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY. WHEN THE SUBJECT CAME BEFORE THEM THE FIRST STEP THEY TOOK, AFTER DISCUSSING TO SOME EXTENT THE MATTER, WAS TO REQUEST ME TO BRING IT OFFICIALLY BEFORE THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, AND INVITE AN EXPRESSION OF THEIR OPINION.

THE COUNCIL OF THAT SOCIETY GAVE THE MOST CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO YOUR PROPOSAL, AND APPOINTED A COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER IT FURTHER AND REPORT UPON IT. THE RESULT OF THEIR DELIBERATIONS WAS EMBODIED IN A RESOLUTION WHICH THEY SUBMITTED TO THEIR COUNCIL, BY WHOM IT WAS APPROVED. THE GENERAL PURPORT OF THE RESOLUTION WAS THAT WHILE THE COUNCIL SYMPATHIZED WITH THE WISH YOU HAD EXPRESSED, THEY FELT THAT IT WAS CONTRARY TO THE USUAL PRACTICE OF THE SOCIETY TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN ORGANIZING A SCHEME FOR THE PURPOSE. IN THE EVENT HOWEVER OF A DEFINITE PLAN OF ACTION BEING PROPOSED, WHETHER BY MEANS OF CONSULTATION BETWEEN THE REPRESENTATIVES OF GEOLOGICAL SURVEYS OR OTHERWISE, THEY WOULD BE READY TO NOMINATE DELEGATES ON PART OF THE SOCIETY TO ATTEND ANY MEETINGS THAT MIGHT BE HELD.

ON RECEIVING THE REPLY OF THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, THE PURPORT OF WHICH I HAVE JUST MENTIONED, THE COUNCIL OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY REQUESTED ME TO WRITE TO YOU EXPRESSING THEIR SYMPATHY WITH YOUR OBJECT, BUT STATING THAT BEFORE TAKING ANY ACTION THEY WOULD BE GLAD TO RECEIVE FROM YOU SOME DEFINITE SUGGESTIONS AS TO THE MEANS BY WHICH THE END YOU HAVE IN VIEW MIGHT BE SECURED.

I DARE SAY THAT BEFORE THIS YOU MAY HAVE COMMUNICATED YOUR SUGGESTION IN OTHER QUARTERS: AND PERHAPS YOU MAY NOW BE IN A CONDITION TO MAKE SOME MORE DEFINITE SUGGESTIONS AS TO THE PRACTICAL STEPS YOU WOULD ADVISE WITH A VIEW TO BRING ABOUT

SUCH AN AGREEMENT AS THAT WHICH YOU DESIRE.

I REMAIN DEAR SIR WILLIAM DAWSON

YOURS VERY FAITHFULLY,
A GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE KINDNESS WITH WHICH YOU
HAVE CLASSIFIED THE PAPERS OF THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, AND
FOR THE USE OF THE SOCIETY, AND THE KINDNESS WITH WHICH
YOU HAVE TAKEN THE PAIN TO WRITE TO ME, AND TO REQUEST ME
TO DISCUSS TO SOME EXTENT THE MATTER, AND TO EXPRESS MY
OPINION IN CONNECTION WITH THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, AND TO
THE COUNCIL OF THAT SOCIETY GAVE THE BEST OF MY CONSIDERATION
TO YOUR PROPOSAL, AND APPOINTED A COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER
IT, AND REPORT TO THE SOCIETY THE RESULT OF THEIR DELIBERATIONS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS. THE COMMITTEE WHICH THEY APPOINTED TO
CONSIDER THE MATTER, BY WHICH IT WAS APPROVED, THE COUNCIL
OF THE SOCIETY WAS THAT WHILE THE COUNCIL SYMPATHIZED
WITH THE VIEW YOU HAD EXPRESSED, THEY FELT THAT IT WAS NOT
THE USUAL PRACTICE OF THE SOCIETY TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE
IN ORGANIZING A COURSE FOR THE PURPOSE, IN THE EVENT OF
HAVING A DEFINITE PLAN OF ACTION BEING PROPOSED, THE TIME BY
MEANS OF CONSULTATION BETWEEN THE MEMBERS, EITHER BY ORAL
DISCUSSIONS OR OTHERWISE, THEY WOULD BE READY TO NOMINATE
DELEGATES ON BEHALF OF THE SOCIETY TO ATTEND ANY MEETING THAT
MIGHT BE HELD.

W. G. Arthur

ON RECEIVING THE REPLY OF THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, THE REPORT
OF WHICH I HAVE JUST MENTIONED, THE COUNCIL OF THE SOCIETY
REQUESTED ME TO WRITE TO YOU EXPRESSING THEIR SYMPATHY
WITH YOUR OBJECT, BUT STATING THAT BEFORE TAKING ANY ACTION
THEY WOULD BE GLAD TO RECEIVE FROM YOU SOME DEFINITE SUGGESTIONS
AS TO THE MEANS BY WHICH THE END YOU WERE IN VIEW MIGHT
BE ACCOMPLISHED.

I HAVE ONLY THAT TO SAY THAT IF YOU MAY HAVE CONSIDERED MY
SUGGESTIONS IN YOUR OWN MIND, AND IF YOU MAY BE IN A
POSITION TO MAKE SOME MORE DEFINITE SUGGESTIONS AS TO THE
MEANS BY WHICH YOU WOULD ADVISE WITH A VIEW TO BRING ABOUT

Arthur
June 1874