

(Copy)

McGill College, Montreal
June 9 1887.

Dear Prof. Stokes.

In reply to your communication of May 27th; I hope to send with this or by the mail immediately succeeding, copies of a Report adopted by the Royal Society of Canada at its recent meeting, and which contains some suggestions as to the manner of effecting the Imperial Geological Union proposed. In addition to these I may refer to the following points.

The proposed Geological Union might form a part of a General Scientific Federation of the Empire, if any plan of this nature is entertained by the Royal Society.

Either in this connection or alone, it would be best promoted by convening a conference, under the auspices of the Royal Society, to which representatives of the Geological Survey and of Societies prosecuting Geological

work might be invited. In the first instance, to save time, such conference might be confined to Great Britain, except that it might include official representatives of the Colonies and India resident in London or happening to be there.

The conference might appoint a central committee in London with authority to convene at a suitable time a more extended conference representing all parts of the Empire to adopt formally a Constitution for the Union.

This Constitution might include the following provisions:—

- (1) The establishment in London of a central council, ^{consisting of representatives,} ~~ex officio~~ or otherwise, of Surveys and Societies, under the Presidency of the President of the Royal Society.
- (2) The affiliation of local Branches of similar character in each Colony or Dependency. In Canada the Branch Association might be under the auspices of the Royal Society of Canada.

(3) Each local Association would be empowered to hold conferences and to appoint delegates to attend such general conferences as might be held in England, and to communicate Reports or other information respecting Geological work in the colony or dependency represented, and suggestions as to combination of action for particular objects.

(4) General conferences would be convened from time to time, if possible annually, and would receive papers and Reports relating to the progress of Geological work, the methods of observing and recording observations, uniformity of Classification and Nomenclature, concentration of effort in particular departments of inquiry, and other matters affecting the progress and unity of work throughout the Empire and the opening up of new fields of investigation.

(5) The Reports of such conferences should contain a Geological Directory for the Empire

so as to facilitate intercommu-
-nication, Reports and notices of
the work in progress in all parts
of the Empire, references to all
publications of general interest,
and in general such informa-
-tion as would enable any
working geologist to know what
was being done in his depart-
-ment and by whom.

(6) The General Council should
be empowered to open communi-
-cation with bodies in foreign
countries, as for example in the
United States of America with
the National Academy, the U. S.
Geological Survey and the American
Association, and to invite them
to send delegates to conferences
or in other ways to cooperate
in the advancement of Science.

(7) The expenses of Secretariat
and publication might be pro-
-vided for by a small membership
fee entitling to attend conferences
and receive copies of publications;
and as the work would be of practical
value and would tend to economy

of expenditure, grants in aid
might be secured from Scientific
funds or from the Governments
of the various parts of the Empire.
It is not improbable that the con-
templated Imperial Institute,
if established, might give sub-
stantial aid in rooms or otherwise.
The expenses of the Union need
not in the first instance be large.

The above are to be regarded
as somewhat crude suggestions; but
these and others would I have no
doubt rapidly assume form and
consistency if a preliminary con-
ference could be held, say about
the time of the meeting of the British
Association if not earlier. Lastly
though I have confined myself
alone to the Geological aspect of
the matter, there seems no reason
why other Scientific subjects, more
especially those relating to the
aspects of nature in different
regions — such as Astronomy,
Physical Geography, Meteorology
and Biology should not form

one general Union on some basis
of the nature suggested above.

I have sent a communi-
-cation with extracts of my former
letter and of the Report of the
Royal Society of Canada to
"Nature", with the view of
exciting a wider interest in the
matter.

I remain, Dear Prof. Stokes
Yours very sincerely

(Signed) Wm Dawson