



GEOLOGICAL & NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY,
Alfred R. C. Selwyn, C.M.G., L.L.D., F.R.S., Director.
MUSEUM AND OFFICE, SUSSEX ST., OTTAWA.

Jan. 9th, 1888.

To Sir William Dawson C. M. G., &c.

Dear Sir,

I beg to apologize for not sooner replying to your favour of the 24th of December, but two cases of dangerous illness in my family have thrown me behind both with my office work & correspondence. I have, however, several times examined the three small specimens sent but have not succeeded in satisfactorily identifying them with any ~~kind~~ of Billings' species. On the whole, they give me the impression of a small Obolella (or what has been called Obolella) apparently of the O. pretiosa type, but as ~~no~~^{the} muscular scars are not shown it is by no means certain to what genus even they should be referred. It seems to me, too, that in these specimens one valve is moderately convex & the other flat, & if that be the case it suggests relationship with Trematis or Discina rather than Obolella. But, in both valves the beaks appear to be marginal or what may be called supra-marginal, whereas in Trematis or Discina they should be either subcentral or submarginal.

On page 68 of the "Palaeozoic Fossils" E. Billings figures three species of Obolella as having been found in the Quebec Group. Of these, the first (O. pretiosa) is said to come from the "Lillery Sandstone," about whose geological position there has been such a difference of opinion both then & now, & the other two



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are very doubtfully referred to the genus Obolella, by the author of that genus. It has yet to be shown, I think, that any true Obolella has been found in beds that are newer than the Cambrian, unless the beds are conglomerates & the fossils found in the pebbles.

Mr Weston says that he would be much obliged if you would kindly return the "tracks" from Mc Ara's brook Arisaig, if you have done with them, as he wishes to exhibit them in the museum.

Many thanks for your permission to retain the three specimens sent; unfortunately two of them were broken in transit.

Wishing you a happy & prosperous New Year

I remain,

Yours very truly,

J. F. Whiteaves.