



GEOLOGICAL & NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY.

Alfred R. C. Selwyn L.L.D., F.R.S., Director.

MUSEUM & OFFICE, SUSSEX ST. OTTAWA.

May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1886.

To Sir William Dawson L.L.D., F.R.S., &c.

Dear Sir,

I have to apologize for not having sooner answered your letter of April 8<sup>th</sup>. I intended writing last week but on Thursday last (to day week) received the sad news of the death of my wife's mother, which has necessitated my absence from town for five or six days.

By running through the latest edition of Miller's catalogue we find that the late Mr E. Billings described 1057 new species & 69 new genera, or, at least, that is what Mr Ami makes out from the book in question.

In regard to the latest state of the discussion between Dr. White & myself about the Cretaceous & Jurassic fauna, there is nothing new to relate.

I maintain, primarily, that the "Lower Shales" of the D.C. Islands, which contain the bulk of the fossils, are of the age of the European Gault, & that this can be substantiated both on palaeontological & stratigraphical evidence, but especially <sup>on</sup> the former. But, associated with



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a large number of typical European Gault species, I find in the Lower Shales of the D.C.I., & in the felsites of the Itasyouco R., a small number of species of mollusca (about 12 or 14 species) which I have entirely failed (after close study) to separate from American species which Meek & White have described as Jurassic. I have, therefore, expressed the opinion that the age of certain rocks <sup>in N. America</sup> which have been held to be Jurassic, is not yet satisfactorily established, ~~proved~~, either on stratigraphical evidence or upon that of the marine or other invertebrata, but offer no opinion on that afforded by the vertebrates.

Privately, here, in Ottawa, Dr. White told me ~~in Ottawa~~ that he considered the arguments which Meek used to support his contention that certain rocks at the Black Hills of Dakota were Jurassic, were by no means convincing, & he admitted also that he could "see no difference", <sup>(use his own words to me)</sup> between certain specimens from the D.C.I. which I had identified with one of his own species, & the types of that species, - though he would not admit that they were the same, in his paper subsequently published.

If you will kindly glance over pages 256-261 of the third part of "Canadian Mesozoic Fossils" & over my reply

REPUBLICAN NATIONAL DISTRICT CONVENT

WEDNESDAY EVENING, MAY 11, 1854



Mr. Towner  
May 15



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a copy of which (in galley) I enclose herein, & to Dr. White, published in Silliman's Journal of last summer, you will see a full statement of my views on that subject.

Dr. White has since become converted to the idea that the Californian rocks which Meek regarded as Jurassic in the Paleontology <sup>are really Cretaceous</sup> of California. Dr. Newmayer, who has not seen one of the fossils, argues that the Lower Shales of the D. C. I. are Jurassic.

Quite recently, Dr. White has enunciated the view that the auriferous slates of California which hold Ucella Ervingtoni are Cretaceous rather than Jurassic. I claim to have suggested that view as far back as in 1876, (in Mesozoic Fossils, Vol. 1, pt. 1, pp. 77 & 78) to have emphasized it in a paper published in the first Vol. of the Trans. Roy. Soc. Can. Dr. White ignores this altogether, as well as the suggestion, which he also <sup>has</sup> adopted, that certain rocks in British Columbia & California are of Neocomian age. It is difficult in writing to express all the points involved in this discussion, but I shall be happy to give you any verbal information that may be necessary for your purpose at any time that may be convenient, on your next visit to Ottawa.

Very truly yours,  
J. F. Whiteaves.



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W. M. L. B. B. B.