

New York,

Mch. 22d. 1889

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Sir J. William Dawson,

My dear sir,

You would gain nothing by joining the Geological Society; it would add nothing to your fame; you do not need it to secure publication of your memoirs; you might attend about as many of its meetings as you do of the London Society. But in spite of all this, I do feel that you should be in the Society. America is a great continent, but the same problems are the troublers to many workers along lines; synonyms are multiplying to an alarming extent and the language of one region is like a sealed book to the workers in another; misunderstandings arise constantly especially among the younger men, who have not yet discovered that they are not infallible; and all this because the workers are not brought together distinctively as geologists. Just here is where men like you and Hall and Dana come in. The young men will follow you and the society will become compacted; but if the elder men whom every young man knows are missing the young men will not come in. A goodly number of the Canadian Survey men will be in by the next meeting, nine of them, but I want you and your son; you two are the Canadian Survey to me, as I have not had occasion to study the work of any other members of the survey. If you come, the Canadian teachers of geology will come too and we shall succeed in securing a fair discussion of American geology. Besides that, I'll be frank, there is another reason; the geologists of the U.S. are not given much to confession of belief in Christianity - some of them being very prominent on the other side. You and Dana represent the at present unpopular side and I do feel that with you and him prominent in the society, there will be a feeling abroad that geology does not necessarily conduce to infidelity. Several of us have discussed this matter in connection with your name and we felt that your absence is a serious loss.

The Society is growing; 120 Fellows have been enrolled; 30 candidates have been offered for the next meeting of the Council one month hence and I expect a large number more; it certainly looks as though nearly all of the 200 whom we thought eligible will be in by the end of the year. I trust you will fill the blanks on the enclosed form and let me be one of those to nominate you.

Sincerely yours,

J. J. Stevenson

