

First used by Mr. J. D. Dana in 1863, *Manual of Geology*, p. 583, to designate the "Bronze or Archaic period" of the Prehistoric or "Age of man," it was not generally accepted. Mr. Dana, wanting to keep the name in geology, had the singular original idea of placing it at the bottom instead of the top of the column of classification,—a backward jump of the whole stratigraphic scale and index, changing only *Archaic period* into *Archæan system*.

*Archaios*, old, ancient, applies to the whole of geological science, and not to a particular epoch; and it can be used only in a general way. Otherwise, if employed for a group or system of rocks, it creates confusion in regard to fossils such as: *Archæopterix*, *Archæocidaris*, *Archæocyathus*, *Archæoniscus*, etc., which exist in strata and systems much younger than the so-called *Archæan system*.

For instance we have the Archaic period (Prehistoric), Archæan system (Pre-Taconic) on the one hand, and *Archæopterix*, *Archæocidaris*, *Archæocyathus*, *Archæoniscus*, etc., fossils, not one of which is to be found in either the Archaic or the Archæan. Archæan is one of those useless and cumbersome names which may well be dispensed with. The terms *Primitive*, *Crystalline* and *Azoic* series of rocks are far better and suffice amply for all demands.

### III. TACONIC SYSTEM.

The greatest error made during the last fifty years is the stubborn and inconceivable opposition to the existence of the Taconic system. Too many persons have been involved in the controversy and are, even now, interested in either suppressing it totally, or at least partially, not to expect all sorts of objections, oppositions and even trivial dissertations.

Billings in a paper, "Remarks on the Taconic controversy," *Canadian Naturalist*, April and July, 1872, has the courage to point out "the constant and utmost opposition of Messrs. James Hall and T. Sterry Hunt."<sup>1</sup> I shall add several other names: Messrs.

<sup>1</sup>At the meeting of the International Geological Congress at Berlin, in 1885, Mr. James Hall joined Messrs. A. Geikie and T. M. Hughes, in order to prevent the voting on the conclusions presented by Prof. G. Dewalque, Secretary of the Commission on the uniformity of nomenclature, which was entirely favorable to the Taconic system. The postponement until the meeting in London, in 1888, of the subject of divisions of the second order for the Lower Palæozoic series, on the ground that it "was mainly an English question," was a manœuvre on the part of those opposed to rendering justice to the just claim of American geology.

Those who succeeded in withdrawing Professor Dewalque's proposition have in view the interest of English geologists; hoping to have, at the London meeting, a ma-