

From ALPHEUS HYATT,

Professor of Palæontology and Comparative Zoology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology;
Curator of Palæontology to the Boston Natural History Society, and to the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Cambridge, Mass.

EASTPORT (MAINE), July 18th, 1876.

J. F. WHITEAVES, Esq

DEAR SIR,

It gives me great pleasure to be able to respond immediately and without reserve, to your letter requesting the endorsement of my name to your application for the position of Palæontologist on the Canadian Survey.

So far as that can be of any service to you, you are most heartily welcome to it. I have been more or less familiar with your zoological writings for several years past, and feel that these, in conjunction with your Palæontological memoirs, shew you to be admirably fitted to fill the position.

I say this with all the more earnestness because of the great rarity of proper zoological training among Palæontologists. We find throughout Europe and this country many good Geologists dealing with Palæontology wholly from that stand-point, as if animal fossils were mere crystalline forms, and could only be used to distinguish one formation from another, things belonging to and part of the rocks in which they are found, and teaching nothing outside of their immediate surroundings. We find, however, only very rarely a Palæontologist who treats fossils as if they had once been living members of a peculiar fauna, with a history of their own prior to the time of fossilization. You are probably as well aware of this as I am, and can excuse the apparent dogmatism of such a statement, especially if you had to contend with it all the time, as I have been obliged to do.

If you are the successful candidate, I beg you will give me early notice of your success, and in the meantime use this note in any way which may seem best to you. If it can in any way contribute to your undertaking, I shall be much pleased.

Very truly yours,

ALPHEUS HYATT.