

FIRST INSTITUTE.

Eastern Ohio Normal School,

LOCATED AT

BARNESVILLE, OHIO.

OPENING JULY 11th, 1876--FIVE WEEK'S TERM--TUITION FREE.

Barnesville, Ohio, 12^{mo} 4["] 1872

Corps of Instructors

C. C. Davidson, A. B.,
Isaac N. Vail,
J. M. Yarnell,
Clara E. Ewers,
—Resident Faculty.

Associate Instructors.

Prof. W. H. Morton, Wheeling, W. Va.
Supt. J. J. Burns, St. Clairsville, Ohio.
Supt. Z. G. Bundy, Wheeling, W. Va.
Prof. R. B. Marsh, Mount Vernon, Ohio.

Esteemed Friend

Prof. J. W. Dawson

How will remember my letter to thee some months ago, in which I made the inquiry whether thou would have the time and inclination to read some of my thoughts if written for thee. Thy early and courteous reply that thou would be willing to hear from me "toward the last of the year", has encouraged me in the work, and I have begun, as I can find spare time from other duties, to condense from my yet imperfect mss. in as brief a form as can be made consistent with the importance of the subject, which is so vast. That it seems as though brevity does not belong thereto, I greatly desire not to advance one thought that will in the least mislead any one, or hinder the advance of scientific truth. For this reason primarily have I sought the counsel of the man I am now addressing. For many years I have in a quiet & independent way, accumulated an array of facts the rendering of which I am unwillig to intrust to any

ordinary mind. The want of funds to carry on investigations has of course contracted their field, but twenty years of toil by a man who purposely worked alone in order to be independent & free from the vagaries of all men, it seems to me, now requires some recognition, & thou art the first man of eminence to whom I have ventured to lay open a new world of thought. This may seem arrogant in me, but if thou wilt devote some attentive ^{thought} in the line I have been following, I think thou wilt admit that a new field if not a new world has been discovered. Thou wilt early conclude, that if what I claim be true, the geological column must be reconstructed from its bottom to its top. I feel that from the very nature of ^{things} this must be true.

Thou wilt see that the vast duration of time, that geologists claim must be from utter necessity reduced to a ^{more} reasonable minimum. Let me then ask thee to patiently follow me in the line of argument I am about to pursue, and then inform me if whether my claims are worthy the careful attention of scientific minds.

Some time near the the last of this month, if no Providential hindrance intervene, I will transmit to thee the evidence with which I claim to prove the conclusions stated on the sheet accompanying this. I have thought best to send this paper now, (as an epitome of that which will follow,) in order to awaken some thought on thy part in the same direction, hoping thou wilt understand why I have done so when thou ^{shalt} have read it all.

12 mo 6. Too cloudy to observe the transit here except a few moments in the forenoon today

Very truly
Isaac N. Vail

An Epitome
Of An Argument To Prove That The Earth Was Formerly
Surrounded By A Complicated System Of Rings,
Like The Planet Saturn.

Conclusion 1st. A thorough investigation of ^{the} earth's strata necessitates the conclusion, that the vapors repelled from the world when in its igneous or molten state did not ^{wholly} return to it as it cooled down, but that vast quantities of our present oceans together with the waters absorbed into the rocky frame of the earth, revolved about it with an independent motion, throughout vast cycles of time.

2nd. These revolving waters were impregnated, & associated with enormous quantities of mineral & metallic substances that were vaporised & sublimed in the molten earth, & driven outward ^{which} under the control of inexorable ^{laws} arranged themselves about the central mass, in the order of their specific gravity: these vapors most heavily laden with mineral & metallic matters, nearest the earth.

3rd. These rings or belts of ~~vapors~~ aqueous & other matter, fell to the earth at different times, in order of their distance from it, forming the characteristic ocean of each age, & deposited thereupon their precipitates, either by vital or other agencies, the beds or strata of each age. Thus the stratified beds of all the earlier ~~for~~ ages, were largely composed of solid particles that once revolved about the earth, and not to any great extent, - composed of the debris of denuded continents, which requires such enormous duration of time

4th. The fall of these revolving bodies, not only made great climatal changes on the earth, & so changed the constitution of each preceding ocean, as to involve animal life therein; but the additional ^{volcanic} ~~pressure~~ of waters & solid matter, made each & every general submergence; and the ^{additional} ~~the~~ pressure of the same, caused each great upheaval & crumpling of the strata previously formed,

5th. These vapors with their associated material, in falling, necessarily descended first in the polar regions. These vapors that

over

fell in the polar regions fell as stupendous quantities of snow!!
those that fell in medial latitudes fell as terrific downrushes
of water; forming in this way all the "Glacial Epochs" the
world ever saw, & the vast changes produced by rapid & universal
denudation & transportation of unaltered materials.

These five propositions, or, as I have called them Conclusions, I
propose to support by a mass of evidence that cannot be denied, and
As they now stand, they can see that they are entirely philo-sophic
in their conception, & if true they must overturn the very foundation
of the prevailing geological theories. I desire not to promise too much,
I am well aware that enthusiasm may carry us too far, but as
the truth of the subsequent propositions depend upon the demonstration
of the first one, I promise to demonstrate that, or acknowledge
my failure like a man. Hoping that by the time I have
supplied the evidence etc. that will have given this momentous
subject some of thy deepest thoughts. I will mail this to
thee, & turn my attention to my MSS, & condense, as may seem
best for this work.

Let me request thee to carefully preserve ^{papers} that I write to thee,
as I may some time wish them returned. My occupation now
not being very favorable to consuming much time in writing
duplicates to preserve.
Very Truly
J. S. D.

P.S. Cannot thou, without too much trouble to thyself, inform me, what the
specific gravities of the rocks of the Laurentian, as a general average, are? Also the
average of the specific gravities of the Acadian Coals? A little information
as to where I can get reliable statistics of this kind, from your country will
suffice.