

Fluide

Re Spuzes

May 1997

Avondale Road, Croydon

May 11. 1896.

Dear Sir W. Dawson.

Your letters of the 20<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> April have duly reached me. I have closely examined the sponge structure on the fragment of shale which you enclosed and I think the delicate spicular fibres of the mesh are only disposed parallel with each other and do not twist spirally round a larger spicula as in the *Comitatis* of Schütz.

It seems to me unfortunate that Rauff should have copied your restorations of the *Mitis* sponges on his plates without making it fully clear that they were of a diagrammatic character. His statement, opposite pls II & III, that the originals of the figures are in the Peter Redpath Museum is likely to lead to the supposition that they are copies in detail of actual specimens.

Owing to the condition of preservation of the Métra sponges, there must always remain certain points of structure on which full certainty cannot be looked for.

I think you have taken a proper course in placing them under Protospongia, although it would have been quite allowable to state that the original specimen of this genus is only a small portion of the wall-mesh which gives no clue to the size or form of the sponge or whether the mesh is similar throughout the sponge or not, or whether it possessed anchoring spicules.

I do not think it possible to give full, exact, definitions of any of the Palaeozoic sponges which are only known compressed and pyritized in black shale.

I see that even Rauff himself has proposed the genus 'Teganium' for a sponge (p. 256) in which hardly anything

whatever is known of its spicular structure  
and it looks like sketching a point in  
bringing your Protos. delicatula in which  
the spicular structure is very imperfect  
to support his new genus.

There is no doubt that the use of Cyatho  
physus, Walcott is very objectionable, but  
Hall's use of Cyathospongia for another form  
precludes substituting this, and if Walcott  
would suggest another name it would  
be preferable. I see that Rauff is employ-  
ing Dichyophyton instead of Dichyophyton  
for Hall's Devonian genus (p. 249) but he  
does not state if the alteration is made by him-  
self or not.

I have not seen any fresh specimens of  
Sasiothrin which thus rests on the single  
individual which you discovered at Métais.

I note that Anni failed to find any  
indications of hexactinellid spicules on

the slabs of Utica shale with Stephanella  
so that the affinities of this form still  
remain an open question.

Very sincerely yours  
George J. Hinde.

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