

Victoria B.C. May 21, 1897.

Dear Sir

River deposits afford probably the best chronometer of geologic time. The amt. of alluvium at their mouths being known and the rate of deposition being approximated a calculation can be entered upon.

As you are aware, Gen. Humphrey & Abbott U.S. Engineers show that the entire alluvium of the Mississippi has been laid down in 4400 years.

Dr Andrews of Chicago. Prof. Acad. Sci. determines the age of the River Tinière, Switzerland as 4300 to 4700 years.

Calculations made by myself on the Nile - the figures being taken from Admiral Spratt's surveys, authorized

by Brit. Parliament, together with
 figures from Super Water Works, Cairo
 Egypt and checked by Herodotus —
 show the Nile to have been run-
 ning when it is far about 4500
 Years.

But the best streams to work
 upon are those as yet unworked
 by man's ash. The Fraser River in
 this Province is being surveyed
 by Mr Roy, Dominion engineer.

That survey could be made to
 contribute the story of that stream.

If the ancient bed could be
 determined and the rate of
 earth movement the calculation
 would be easy.

May I suggest that rivers

carry more earth down to the sea than is suspended in the water. The bottom is being shored along continually - a movement going on when ~~so~~ the water is perfectly clear. The method of getting a bottle of water from near the bottom and another from just under the surface is therefore imperfect. The best way is to note the seaward progress of the bars and their average minimum height.

I have written Dr G. R. Darwin on this subject though not so fully as near to you and I trust that he will get the figures.

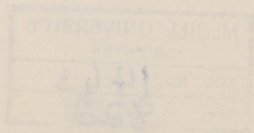
Could I ask the favor of you to procure for me the Blue Book (Eng. Parliament) containing Admiral Spratt's report on soundings off the mouth of the Nile? It was made while the Govt. was considering the expediency of coöperating in digging the Suez Canal. I do not know to whom to apply.

The mouth of Fraser river as far as Pitt river - perhaps as far as Yale - was probably a fiord like the many inlets on this coast. The ancient bottom was sea sand. Drills sunk to a depth where no more fluviatile shells occur would determine the

depth prior to the river's work - and
trawls would show how far the
river carries its silt now. It would
be interesting if the calculations should
agree with those above noted -

Yours Sincerely

Joseph D. Wilson



W. L. M.
Victoria
Re. Rivers

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