

THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 1871

*FIRST REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION  
ON SCIENTIFIC INSTRUCTION AND THE  
ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE.*

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

*May it please your Majesty—*

WE, the Commissioners appointed by Your Majesty to make Inquiry with regard to Scientific Instruction and the Advancement of Science, humbly beg leave to present to Your Majesty the following First Report:—

1. We have heard the evidence of witnesses in reference to the following subjects, forming part of our inquiry, viz., the Royal School of Mines, the Geological Survey of Great Britain and Ireland, the Mining Record Office, and the Museum of Practical Geology, at present located in Jermyn Street; and also concerning the Royal College of Chemistry, at present lodged in a building in Oxford Street; which institutions are under one head, entitled Director-General of the Geological Survey of Great Britain and Ireland and Director of the Royal School of Mines.

2. There is no necessary connection between the direction of the Geological Survey of Great Britain and Ireland and the government of the Royal School of Mines.

3. The Royal School of Mines and the Royal College of Chemistry, which practically constitute one School of Pure and Applied Science, are not organised in such a manner as to enable them to perform efficiently the work for which they were originally, or are, at present, intended. We base this conclusion upon three grounds, (a) The absence of a chair of Mathematics, (b) The absence of Physical or Biological Laboratories in which students can receive practical instruction, (c) the insufficiency of accommodation in the Royal College of Chemistry.

4. The officers of the Geological Survey are greatly hindered in their work by want of accommodation; for although their number has been quintupled during the last twenty years, the space originally allotted to them has not been increased.

5. The space allotted to the Mining Record Office is already insufficient for the proper reception and arrangement of the valuable series of documents accumulated there; and for the accommodation of the public who desire to consult them.

6. The collections in the Museum of Practical Geology require greater space for their proper display than is at present afforded.

7. In order to provide a remedy for the inconveniences which have been enumerated, we recommend: (a) That the building in Jermyn Street be given up to the Survey and to the Museum, with the reservation that the Lectures to Working Men be delivered as heretofore in the Theatre; (b) That the building in Oxford Street be vacated by the Royal College of Chemistry; and (c) That the Mining Record Office be lodged with the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade; or, failing accommodation there, in the building now occupied by the Royal College of Chemistry.

8. Without expressing any opinion, at present, as to the policy of Government Schools of Science, your Commis-

sioners, having to deal with the Royal School of Mines and the Royal College of Chemistry as Institutions which have existed for 20 years, and which, during that period, have turned out a large number of well-instructed Students, consider that such steps should be taken as may be necessary to render their Teaching thoroughly efficient.

9. With this object we recommend that the two Institutions be consolidated; that Mathematics be added to the Courses of Instruction now given; and that sufficient Laboratories and Assistance for giving Practical Instruction in Physics, Chemistry, and Biology, be provided.

10. The Institution thus formed (hereinafter called the "Science School") may be conveniently and efficiently governed by a Council of Professors, one of that body acting as Dean.

11. We have further heard evidence concerning the Buildings at South Kensington, now nearly completed, and intended for the reception of a projected School of Naval Architecture and Science; and we recommend that the Science School should be accommodated in these buildings. We have given careful attention to the considerations in favour of the retention in Jermyn Street of the Technical Instruction in certain branches, but we are of opinion that these considerations are outweighed by the great advantages to be derived from concentration.

12. We have further heard evidence concerning the Royal School of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering, now conducted at South Kensington; and we recommend that the theoretical instruction of that school should in future be given in the Science School, the general instruction in Mathematics, Physical Science, and Mechanical Drawing thus becoming common to both schools. We also recommend that no additional buildings, and no reconstruction of the temporary buildings at present occupied by the Royal School of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering, should be undertaken, until a further Report has been received from this Commission.

13. We have further heard evidence concerning the system of teaching Elementary Science under the Science and Art Department; and we are of opinion that the quality of the Instruction given under this Department would be greatly improved if the teachers received Practical Instruction in Elementary Science. Such instruction has, indeed, already been given with marked advantage, although only to a limited extent. The Science School will be available for the instruction of many Science Teachers throughout the country; but we reserve for a Further Report any expression of opinion as to the precise character of such Instruction, and as to the conditions under which it shall be accessible.

14. The organisation of, and accommodation required by, the Science School (including its Technical Branches) and the Royal School of Naval Architecture, will be dealt with in detail in a further Report.

All which we humbly submit for Your Majesty's gracious consideration.

(Signed) DEVONSHIRE

LANSDOWNE, JOHN LUBBOCK, J. P. KAY SHUTTLEWORTH, B. SAMUELSON, W. SHARPEY, THOMAS H. HUXLEY, G. G. STOKES, HENRY J. S. SMITH.

J. NORMAN LOCKYER, Secretary

March 9, 1871