

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE EARLIEST DISCOVERED EVIDENCE OF EXTINCT STRUTHIOUS BIRDS IN NEW ZEALAND.

SIR,—I have the pleasure, agreeably with your request, to inform you that I have received the permission of Benjamin Bright, Esq., to deposit in the British Museum the portion of “bone of an unknown Struthious bird of large size, presumed to be extinct,”—described and figured in the third volume of the “Transactions of the Zoological Society,” p. 29, pl. iii., and subsequently determined as the shaft of the femur of *Dinornis Struthioides* (Owen).

The individual who, in October, 1839,¹ brought this specimen to me, for sale, at the Royal College of Surgeons, asked ten guineas for it. When I had convinced myself that it was the shaft of the femur of a Bird, and that the evidence supplied by the vendor made it at least probable that the specimen had been found in New Zealand, I reported the circumstances to the Board of Curators of the Royal College of Surgeons, and recommended the purchase of the specimen. This was declined. I had determined, on being entrusted with office in the Hunterian Museum, not to form a private collection, and my circumstances, in 1839, did not allow me to give ten guineas for a specimen; and this I stated to the vendor, in requesting permission to describe and figure it: which permission he liberally granted.

The specimen was purchased by Benjamin Bright, Esq., of Bristol, to whom a copy of the abstract of my paper had been sent, and was placed in his private museum; which, on his decease, came into the possession of his son. On communicating to this gentleman the desirability of the original bone of the *Dinornis* being deposited in the British Museum, he most liberally permitted me to submit to the Trustees an offer, as a donation, of the entire Collection made by his father and grandfather, including the original specimen which initiated the series of papers on the *Dinornis* that have since appeared in the “Zoological Transactions.”

RICHARD OWEN.

ON THE RELATION OF PTERASPIS AND SCAPHASPIS.

SIR,—I have but just seen Magister Schmidt's letter in the July Number of the GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE (p. 330). *Ex cathedra* utterances are interesting only when the individual who indulges in them is for some reason the representative of a party, or has acquired the confidence of qualified critics. For Mr. Schmidt therefore to tell us that Kunth's evidence appears “most satisfactory,” and that the two shields figured by him “are not brought into contact accidentally,” is sheer waste of your space and of his time. If he will have the goodness to send to you some reasoning upon the existing *data*, or an account

¹ See “Proceedings of the Zoological Society,” November 12, 1839, p. 169.