

## 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,<sup>1</sup> 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

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

of new *data* bearing on the matter, he will possibly render some service to English geologists; but off-hand enunciations of simple opinion have no special value because they come from Russia.

Mr. Schmidt obviously can tell us no more about Kunth's specimen than what we have seen, and what he has seen, in Kunth's paper.<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to read that Mr. Schmidt thinks he has found bone-lacunæ in *Pteraspis*; but it is desirable to caution the readers of the *GEOL. MAG.* as to accepting the supposed fact. There have been so many blunders on the Continent with regard to *Pteraspis*, that it will not be wise to attach any importance to the statement until we have evidence that the shield examined was really that of *Pteraspis*. It is not at all improbable that it was, but it is also not improbable that it was something else.

E. RAY LANKESTER.

EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD,  
Sept. 1st, 1873.

#### MR. WARD ON THE GLACIATION OF THE LAKE DISTRICT.

SIR,—On reading Mr. J. Clifton Ward's paper on the above subject, in the last number of the *Quarterly Journ. of the Geol. Society*, I find that he has been led by an independent series of observations to corroborate several statements and opinions I have from time to time advanced in the pages of the *GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE*. But as Mr. Ward does not refer to what others have done before him in the Lake District, would you allow me to direct the attention of those of your readers who are interested in the subject to Vol. VII., August, October, and December, 1870; Vol. VIII., February, June, and July, 1871; and Vol. IX., September, 1872. In one or other of these seven articles several phenomena noticed by Mr. Ward have been described; the results of observations on the dispersion of syenite erratics from the Buttermere and Ennerdale centres, stated; the distinction between mounds of Boulder-clay, sand, gravel, and glacial moraines, discussed; the almost entire limitation of true moraines to the upper valleys, advocated (contrary to prevailing ideas); the transportation of erratics by floating-ice in various directions, and often irrespectively of the drainage, insisted on, etc. In making these remarks my object is very far from undervaluing the great mass of entirely new information contained in Mr. Ward's paper.

D. MACKINTOSH.

<sup>1</sup> Magister Schmidt had forwarded an earlier communication than that referred to above, which appeared in the April Number of the *GEOL. MAG.* (p. 152), in which is also contained a refutation of Dr. Kunth's views by Mr. Lankester (p. 190). Doubtless M. Schmidt has good grounds for the opinions he has expressed concerning the assumed relationship to each other of *Pteraspis* and *Scaphaspis*—as the dorsal and ventral shields of the same individual—and we shall be glad to receive a further account of his researches on this important subject.—*EDIT. GEOL. MAG.*