

Meyer led the party to a quarry of the Lower Greensand west of Guildford, where the upper member of this interesting formation is well seen, with its oblique bedding and numerous regular faultings, and where its fragmentary shells, corals, and other organisms can be largely collected. A hasty visit to St. Catherine's Chapel, on the knoll of Lower Greensand, overlooking the railway, the valley, and Shalford Park, ended the expedition, which, favoured throughout with glorious sunshine, now broke up, amidst congratulations on a successful day and a happy meeting of mutual pleasure and instruction, with a hearty desire to meet again in that beautiful county under the guidance of the same good leaders.—*Mining Journal*, June 12, 1869.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DISCOVERY OF DIAMONDS, ETC., AT THE CAPE.¹

SIR,—Having read in your May (1869) Number, p. 208, Dr. Atherstone's reply to my article (printed in the *GEOL. MAG.* Vol. V. p. 558, for December, 1868), entitled "Diamonds from the Cape of Good Hope," allow me to add a few words in rejoinder.

And, firstly, Dr. Atherstone says (p. 209), "As it was mainly through me that this accidental discovery was brought to light . . . I am therefore, by implication, accused of being one of the impostors in this fraudulent 'bubble scheme,'"—allow me to assure Dr. Atherstone that I did not intend in any way to implicate him, or indeed any one personally as acting designedly to mislead; my motive (whatever Dr. Atherstone or the Cape Newspaper Editors may insinuate to the contrary) was honestly to caution the scientific—and through them the public at large—against placing implicit reliance upon the newspaper reports sent home from that colony respecting these wonderful diamond discoveries, which, if not altogether without foundation in fact, were at that time, to say the least, grossly exaggerated statements.

Secondly, the same writer states (p. 213), "Mr. Gregory told me his object was not to search for diamonds but for Nickel and other minerals usually found associated with them," etc. I admit that I said I might look for Nickel minerals, but I deny most emphatically having said that I was going to search for *Nickel and other minerals associated with diamonds*, as Nickel ores are *never found* associated with diamonds. Indeed I am quite certain that not a single person in Cape Colony had any idea of the real object of my visit (whatever they may now assert to the contrary) until the appearance of Mr. Emanuel's letter in the "Journal of the Society of Arts" informed them, and subsequently my own article in your *MAGAZINE* already referred to. In matters of this kind I have learned to keep my own counsel.

Thirdly, as to my geological observations—(1) That with the knowledge we at present possess of the diamond-bearing rocks in

¹ This letter was sent for publication in the June Number, but we were compelled to postpone it, with other matter, from want of space.—EDIT.

other parts of the world, we are led from the geological character of that part of the country to consider it impossible that any diamonds could really have been found there: I must beg still to hold to that opinion—first, because Dr. Atherstone himself has no direct knowledge of the district referred to, nor, secondly, of the exact places where the diamonds were really found;¹ and, thirdly, because Dr. Atherstone told me himself that he did not know much about Geology, but that his son was a pupil of Professor Tennant's, and he was therefore interested in Geology. (2) As to my silence regarding the presence of *Dicynodon* remains: I was quite aware of their occurrence a few miles south of Cradock, and saw many specimens when at Dr. Grey's, of Cradock, but not any "beautifully perfect reptilian and other fossils" (*vide* p. 211), as stated by Dr. Atherstone; indeed these remains are always in a very fragmentary condition, by reason of the indurated and unworkable nature of the matrix in which they are contained. But south of Cradock does not mean—the whole district in a direct line from Cradock to Hopetown—which is what I stated in my paper (*GEOL. MAG.* Vol. V. p. 558).

It should always be borne in mind that Geology, like many other sciences, is not infallible, and that it is quite possible that diamonds may be found in rocks where past experience has taught us they never occur,² but still we find the maxim *experientia docet* usually holds good in diamond-prospecting as well as in that for gold.

Fourthly, Dr. Atherstone's statement (p. 212) that, from a sight of a "photograph and plaster-cast," which he showed me, I "at once pronounced an opinion as to its quality, declaring it to be a 'boart' diamond of very little value," needs correction. What I really said was that, from the multitude of striæ on the imperfect faces of the dodecahedron (the form of which I could distinguish), I was led to conclude that it was not of first-rate quality; as to its value I gave no opinion whatever.

I could have wished (did space permit) to call attention to many grossly incorrect statements which have been printed in the Cape newspapers, both as to the diamond discoveries and also in reference to myself; but the proverb says, "passion is ever the enemy of truth." Both diamond and gold manias have affected this Colony, although, happily, the gold-fever is to some extent allayed by the fact that the precious metal has not hitherto been found in paying quantities. With the past year's experience, it is now hardly necessary to say to investors, "at all great bargains pause awhile."

JAMES R. GREGORY.

15, RUSSELL STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON, May 20th, 1869.

¹ All Dr. Atherstone's information (as may be seen by a reference to his article in the May Number, pp. 208–213), is obtained from the statements made by Dutch Boers, natives, farm-labourers, women, and children; and he does not appear in any single instance to have visited any reputed diamond region, so that at present we are no nearer than we were last year to the actual locality whence the diamonds announced were derived.—J.R.G.

² Mr. Sorby's recent paper, read before the Royal Society, suggests quite a new theory as to the formation of diamonds, and deserves careful attention; but little is known of the origin of diamonds or their parent rock, so that we must not entirely put aside the old theory for the new.—J.R.G.