

Dr. Feistmantel's criticisms. Dr. Feistmantel suffers from the great disadvantage of writing in a foreign language, and I think he expresses himself sometimes more forcibly than he intends.

The object of my paper was to point out that Dr. Feistmantel had overlooked some of the arguments which had mainly influenced the opinions of those of his colleagues who had written upon the age of certain portions of the Gondwana series. I may have been in error on certain points, as on the question of the occurrence of Cycads in the Damudas, but I still think that Dr. Feistmantel's enthusiasm has led him to overestimate the arguments in favour of his own views, and to undervalue those which are opposed to his conclusions. I have no wish to insist upon an Upper Oolitic or Post-Oolitic horizon for the plant-beds of Cutch, and I am far from considering the Palæozoic age of the Damuda beds as proved; but I think that Dr. Feistmantel has argued, however ably, on one side of the case only, and that it was a mere act of justice to his predecessors to explain why they had come to a different conclusion.

My mistake about the occurrence of the *Cycadaceæ* requires a few words of explanation, the more so that Dr. Feistmantel evidently considers it of the greatest importance, for he calls attention to it in a marked manner no less than three times in two pages, so as to produce the impression that I had committed a most absurd blunder. I wrote, "Cycads have not hitherto been found in the latter," *i.e.* the Lower Gondwana rocks. Dr. Feistmantel replies, "Cycadaceous plants are not absent at all"; and he proceeds to enumerate three species, and he adds in a footnote referring especially to me, "they (*i.e.* Cycads) were indeed known long ago." Now what are the facts? Two of the three species enumerated by Dr. Feistmantel, *viz.* *Nöggerathia Vosgesiaca* and the *Glossozamites*, were, to the best of my knowledge, not even detected by Dr. Feistmantel himself till after my paper was written; certainly no notice of them was published, nor had Dr. Feistmantel called my attention to them. The third species, described by Sir C. Bunbury as *Nöggerathia Hislopi*, was, if I am not mistaken (I am writing at a distance from all books of reference), referred with doubt to the genus; and *Nöggerathia* certainly was not formerly classed as a Cycad; still Dr. Feistmantel may be right in referring it without any doubt to the *Cycadaceæ*, and all I have to say in apology is that I was not aware that the Cycadaceous nature of the genus had been ascertained. I think this explanation is necessary, and it is to be regretted that Dr. Feistmantel, by omitting to state all the facts, has compelled me to make it.

W. T. BLANFORD.

CAMP, SIND, February 1st, 1877.

MR. CARPENTER ON THE PLANET MARS.¹

SIR,—In the first paragraph of the first article of your last issue, Mr. Carpenter has exactly inverted the proper descriptions of Mr. Croll's and Mr. Murphy's theories. This no doubt was a slip of the pen. But when he goes on to say that it has occurred to him that he has

¹ See the March Number, p. 97.

never seen in this discussion (on climate) any reference to the planet Mars, he ought to have added, that it had *not* occurred to him to look out "Mars" in the index to "Climate and Time." O. F.

THE PILSEN PERMO-CARBONIFEROUS BEDS.

SIR,—In the extremely interesting paper on the Permo-Carboniferous beds of Bohemia which appears in the current number of the GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE, Dr. O. Feistmantel appears to rely very strongly on the announcement which he says was made by Dr. Anton Fritsch at the last meeting of the British Association that he considered the Nürschan Gas-coal horizon as a passage-bed from Carboniferous to Permian. Now when Dr. Fritsch exhibited his splendid series of specimens before the Geological Section, it was evident that he avoided carefully expressing any statement of opinion as to the exact age of the beds whence they came. A member then rose and asked Dr. Fritsch whether he considered the Pilsen Gas-coal series as Carboniferous or Permian, or whether he looked upon them as passage-beds. The only answer elicited from the cautious palæontologist was that it was not yet time to settle the matter, and that more work was required before the question was ripe for decision. In fact, he declined to give any clue as to what his views on the subject might be.

THE QUESTIONER HIMSELF.

8 *March*, 1877.

THE TERM "CHLORITIC MARL."

SIR,—In the review of *Cambridgeshire Geology*, by the Rev. T. G. Bonney, in your last Number, your reviewer takes exception to the use in that work of the term "Chloritic Marl" as applied to the Phosphatic Nodule-bed at the base of the Chalk-marl in Cambridgeshire and elsewhere. From this it would appear that there is some doubt about the proper use of the term, and I should be very glad to hear from your reviewer what he considers the true typical Chloritic Marl. The question of nomenclature is so important that I feel sure your readers will not regret the use of a small portion of your valuable space in clearing up a doubt which seems to exist on this subject.

H. GEORGE FORDHAM.

ODSEY, ROYSTON, *March 5th*, 1877.

OBITUARY.

JAMES SCOTT BOWERBANK, F.R.S., F.L.S., F.G.S.,

PRESIDENT OF THE PALÆONTOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

BORN JULY 14, 1797. DIED MARCH 8, 1877.

It is with no ordinary feelings of regret that we record the loss of the Founder and President of the Palæontographical Society.

James Scott Bowerbank was born in Bishopgate, London, in 1797. He succeeded, in conjunction with his brother, to his father's distillery, in which business he was an active partner until 1847. From his youth he exhibited a strong attachment to Natural History pursuits, especially to Botany. When of age, he joined the Mathematical Society of Spitalfields, and remained a member until its incorporation with the Royal Astronomical Society in 1845. Here he