they occur in veins a quarter of an inch thick, or in masses many miles wide.

Science is not advanced by the dreaming of dreams—to make progress we require evidence culminating in proof.

20, Nevern Square,
10*th November*, 1890. C. A. McMahon.

PROF. PRESTWICH, F.R.S., ON THE ELEVATION OF THE WEALD.

Sir,—I am much obliged to Prof. Prestwich for drawing attention to an expression in my "Note on the Elevation of the Weald" (Geol. Mag. September, 1890), to which I feel bound to say *peccavi*. The fact is, when that paper was written, I was ignorant of the view which the Professor had put forward so long ago as 1858 in a paper, of which he has since been good enough to send me a copy. When my 1883 paper was written, the only published statement of Prof. Prestwich's view on the geological data of the Wealden elevation, which I had before me, was that contained in the published abstract of a paper read (in my hearing) before Section C of the Brit. Assoc. at York in 1881. I am sorry I was misled by this; and the more so as it was criticized by me more than once in the 1883 paper, to which the Professor refers. A copy of that paper was sent to him at the time of its publication; but, strange to say, in the Professor's letter (which is now before me) acknowledging the receipt of it (which seems to have been lost sight of since), and offering some remarks upon some points in it, no notice was taken of my criticisms on the York paper. Was it very extraordinary that under such circumstances I was lulled into the belief that I had correctly interpreted the statements contained therein?

Prof. Prestwich will kindly allow me to refer to some remarks I ventured to make in the discussions of Parts II. and III. of his recent great paper, "On the Westleton and Mundesley Beds, etc.," the substance of which is published in the Journal of the Geological Society. These indicate, I think, sufficiently my position with regard to this question.

As to Mr. Clement Reid's paper in "Nature" in 1886 (not 1888), I did not feel the necessity of pointing out (what must be obvious to any one who looks at it), that it was a "friendly corroboration" of Prof. Prestwich's view expressed years before.

The argument for contemporaneity, "on the ground of approximate equality of altitude above the sea," I had no idea of saddling upon Prof. Prestwich in particular. I mentioned it as the only argument I had heard put forward by geologists, with whom I had discussed the question, after I suggested in the pages of the Geol. Mag. (1888) a different view to those generally held, from an examination of the principal sections "in the field."

As regards the "larger and more theoretical questions" raised in my paper, I think I have sufficiently indicated the authorities which have furnished the data from which my inferences are drawn. I am, of course, allowed to draw my own conclusion from the Professor's dignified refusal to consider them.

I can only express again my regret that I did not re-write the objectionable passage which has called forth this friendly protest from one for whom I entertain the most sincere regard; yet I think that results arrived at independently have a value, even if they are not "novel."

WELLINGTON COLLEGE, BERKS. A. IRVING.

THE ELEVATION OF THE WEALD.

SIR,—In Mr. H. W. Monckton's idea as to the "retreat of the sea" in connexion with the marine abrasion of the Weald anticlinal (see GEOL. MAG. September, 1890, p. 395), he has got a glimpse of what has been obvious enough to most students of geology for the last quarter of a century. For at least that period of time Sir Andrew Ramsay's view of the marine abrasion of the original arch of the Weald anticlinal, followed by atmospheric waste and erosion (determining the present features of the country) has been before the world in his valuable and suggestive work, "The Physical Geology and Geography of Great Britain." Mr. Monckton seems to consider the area of the *deposition* of the Wealden series to have been approximately conterminous with the present area known as the Weald. In the light of what we know of a great series of Tertiary movements in Central and Western Europe, it must be rash in the extreme to assume that the present relations of sea and land are any index of what they were in even later Mesozoic time. The statement, that, "from some undetermined period [extending at least as far back as the Purbeck, *loc. cit.*] until the formation of the Gault the south-east of England was an area of depression, *and the progress of depression was more rapid upon an east and west line which now forms the anticlinal of the Weald than either to the north or south of it*," is in flat contradiction to Prof. Green's constructive sketch of the old Wealden Estuary (see "Physical Geology," pp. 294-6). I commend this to Mr. Monckton's attention.

In his concluding paragraphs it seems he has done me the honour to reproduce partly some arguments as to the non-commensurate elevation of the Weald, which I put before the Geological Society in June last at a meeting at which he was present. These arguments are given in a more complete form in my paper in the GEOL. MAG. for September, 1890, pp. 405–6.

WELLINGTON COLLEGE, BERKS. A. IRVING.

OBITUARY.

ORAZIO SILVESTRI.

WE regret to record the death of this distinguished Sicilian Geologist and Chemist, which occurred at Catania on August 17, after much suffering. Prof. Silvestri has contributed largely to our knowledge of the workings and chemistry of Etna, and to the general geology of Sicily, while his masterly paper on the genus *Nodosaria*, and his interesting papers on the works of Soldani are of great interest and value to students of the Foraminifera.

ERRATUM.—In GEOL. MAG. November, 1890, p. 501, fourteenth line from top of page, for "These are," etc., read *There* are, etc.—EDIT. GEOL. MAG.