

examination has induced me to believe that they were not in the undisturbed brick-earth, but in the lower part of the bed which lies immediately upon it, consisting of washed brick-earth, the run of the hill. In this bed, which at this particular point is between 7 and 8 feet in thickness and deepens towards the N.E., there is a great difference between its upper and lower portions, for about 4 feet from the upper surface it contains a very large quantity of flints, below that they are less frequent, and disappear as you approach the true brick-earth. At first sight, there seems to be but little or no difference between the lower part of the rain-wash bed and the true brick-earth. Also, from the men that removed the soil immediately over the skeletons, I found that there was distinct evidence that it had been disturbed, for part of the upper portion of the bed was found mingled with the lower; that and the fact that the stone was between the skeletons, close to the skulls, would tend to show that they had been buried there, though perhaps at some remote period.

I remain, yours sincerely,

H. F. RIVERS.

Sidney Villa, Luton, Chatham, May 25, 1863.

Holoptychius and Glyptolepis.

DEAR SIR,—Will you allow me space for a few remarks on communications which have recently appeared in your pages, and which have been suggested at least by articles of mine?

And first, as to the restoration of *Pteraspis*, I intended that in my second diagram the posterior portion of the test should be marked off by a dotted or broken line. I was uncertain as to the exact position of the spine, and did not therefore venture to restore that portion, although specimens of it separated from the test were in my possession. Mr. Powrie's beautiful specimen clearly indicates the character and position of the spine. But on looking at his figure, it will be seen that it confirms the remark which I made, and which I considered the chief point brought forward by me, even that our Scottish specimens do not show any separation between the cornua and the test, but that the terminal edge on either side of the spine is continuous. I willingly admit that a shade of doubt rests on my first diagram; but I had virtually stated the ground of that myself, and I consider that diagram as of value chiefly in exhibiting the long-snouted form which the shield of *Pteraspis* sometimes assumes, perhaps indicating specific difference. I put forward my third diagram as entirely conjectural, and, along with my friend Mr. Powrie, must turn to the rocks, in the hope of finding some of those long-entombed relics which will throw light on the matter.

And then, as to the case which has been so much debated in your columns,—*Holoptychius v. Glyptolepis*,—I knew from Mr. Powrie's own article in the Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society that *Glyptolepis* had been noticed in the sandstone of Dura Den, and I simply wished to describe a slab in our local museum from that locality. I did not know what correspondence there might be privately between those who were interested in the matter. I am glad, however, that the attention of Mr. Davies has been called to it, and that he has communicated to your readers the results of his keen discrimination. On the specimen of *Holoptychius Andersoni*, to which I have access, there are several scales towards the posterior part of the body, which display what Mr. Powrie calls so picturesquely "the crescent of points;" but from what was said in the 'De-

cade' by so correct an observer as the author of it, I was disposed to think that these might be scattered scales of *Glyptolepis* lying there. I have looked at them again, and now believe them to be in their original position, or at least slightly displaced. I am afraid that *Holoptychius*, unless the other points of difference hold, will have to go down before the kindred *Glyptolepis*; but without determining the issue, I have simply sought to place on record what I had observed in the slab dug some years ago from Dura Den. *Quantum valeat.*

Yours truly,

HUGH MITCHELL.

Craig, May 6th, 1863.

The Lincolnshire Flats.

SIR,—A letter, headed "The Antiquity of Man," which appeared in the 'Times' newspaper of April 16, 1863, from Mr. J. A. Clarke, of Long Sutton, will, it is to be hoped, direct the attention of geologists to the marsh and fen countries in the east of England. As he happily expresses himself, "these districts interlace archæology with geology;" and in confirmation of this, I would offer to you a few remarks upon one small portion of the marsh, on the east coast of Lincolnshire: that portion lies in the parishes of Orby, Addlethorpe, Ingoldmells, Hoggsthorpe, Burgh, and Thorpe. I speak more particularly of the first three parishes, any few observations that I have myself made referring to them, and what I know of the others, being more from hearsay.

I was a frequent visitor to the seacoast of Lincolnshire in years past, and my attention was called to certain nodules of burnt clay, called by the country people "hand-bricks," because they almost all bear the impression of the human hand, as though they had been grasped by it. Many fanciful ideas have been attached to their origin and use; but very little examination is sufficient to determine that they are the refuse of some manufacture of pottery, and have been used as props to support earthenware, and give access and circulation to the flames in the kiln. The like pieces of clay have, as an antiquarian informed me, been found in some of the Channel Islands, and a paper upon them exists in some periodical or transactions of some society. The use of these "hand-bricks" being pretty clear, I paid no further attention to them, until the subject of the works of "man primæval" began to be mooted, when the age of these bricks became an interesting question. I thought it worth while to make a few excavations on spots where the bricks were known to exist, and to try what could be learnt further about them. In the autumn of 1861 I made some fourteen or fifteen diggings, commencing under the strongest impression that the nodules were of very remote antiquity. The first excavation confirmed the view I had taken of the use to which they had been applied; they were surrounded by the débris of pottery, lying in every position, as if they had been thrown aside as useless and done with. As I proceeded I found nothing that threw any light upon the age of the hand-bricks, until the workmen, in almost the very last spadeful of the last excavation, threw up the bottom part of a pot, which, much to my disappointment, bore the marks of the wheel, and was clearly a piece of Roman pottery. The use, then, of these bricks, which may have been settled perhaps without my knowing it, is apparent; but their age I never heard any one hint at. They are Roman, and of no greater antiquity than the time of the sojourn of the Romans in Britain.

The men who dug for me recognized, as they said, the same appearances