

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MILLSTONE GRIT AT VOBSTER.

SIR,—The amount of disturbance and confusion existing in the Coal-measures immediately north of the Mendip Hills has long been a subject which has greatly exercised the scientific imagination of geologists. Any fact that can throw light upon the question, or that serves to support one theory or the other in explanation of the inversions of strata in the Nettlebridge Valley, is worthy of record. One such fact it is in my power to lay before your readers in connexion with the Vobster inversion. That coal has been worked beneath this mass of limestone it is scarcely necessary for me here to assert. Mr. McMurtrie has satisfactorily established that fact in a paper read before the Bath Field Club in the year 1874, and published in the third vol. of the "Proceedings." But how did this mass come here? In a paper contributed to your *MAGAZINE* for 1871, p. 150, with the legitimate horror entertained by a member of H.M.G.S. against cataclysmic action, Mr. Horace B. Woodward attempts to account for this abnormal position of the limestone by a compound reversed fault and anticlinal theory, and an ingenious "Diagram Section" is given to illustrate his view. In his dissent from the theory which would account for this position by a folding over of the main ridge, he states, that a serious difficulty presents itself in the absence of the Millstone Grit which ought to be found in its true position between the Mountain Limestone and the Coal-measures proper, had their folding over to the north really occurred. Now it gives me much pleasure to state that the discovery of these hitherto missing beds in the position required must remove this "serious difficulty." During a recent visit with Mr. McMurtrie and others to Vobster, we found that the quarry men, under Mr. Batey's superintendence, in driving a tunnel through the south face of the quarry in a northerly direction were then actually in the Millstone Grit beds, which were severely trying the temper of their tools. These beds dipped at an angle of about 46° S., and were found beneath shales and limestone dipping from 46° to 55° in the same direction and thoroughly conformable. Thus another proof has been added in support of the view that these beds have been turned completely topsy-turvy; in other words, the upthrow-fault theory of the earlier writers having already been proved to have no real existence, and the chief objection which seems to have hindered Mr. Woodward, a geologist well acquainted with our Mendip complications, from accepting the generally accepted view of a folding over of the beds, having now been met; what remains, but to accept the alternative that these beds, originally horizontal, have been squeezed together, thrown up, and finally folded over from the main ridge, by some process which it would take a long glimpse down the corridors of time to fully comprehend and unravel.

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