

Among the many enthusiastic workers on Geology in remoter regions of Great Britain, none deserves our recognition more than the Rev. George Gordon (1801–1893), who at the age of ninety was able to wield his geological hammer, and, journeying in a basket-chaise, was keen to conduct an interested student to the fine quarries of Old Red Sandstone and Trias in the vicinity of Elgin. Associated with him in his local researches, another zealous observer, the Rev. J. M. Joass, of Golspie, has added much to our knowledge of the Secondary and older strata in north-eastern Scotland.

From about the year 1850 onwards for ten or twelve years there was a good deal of controversy over bones, between Mantell and Owen, John Edward Gray and Owen, Owen and Falconer, Falconer and Huxley, and Huxley and Owen. It is therefore interesting to read the impression of Sir Charles Bunbury, who after an interview with Owen recorded: 'Owen is delightful—with such vast knowledge, most unassuming simplicity, and a true and unaffected eloquence when excited by a favourite subject.'¹ No man, indeed, could be more amiable, yet in the midst of heated controversy his smile, apparently child-like and bland, was rather apt to accentuate caustic remarks. On one occasion, as told by Sir John Evans, Owen when engaged with Falconer in a discussion on fossil bones, spoke of his antagonist as 'that distinguished *botanist*, Dr. Falconer.'

In 1851 there was 'great stir in the scientific world' about who was to occupy König's place at the British Museum, and the name of Owen had been suggested.²

Huxley remarked 'The heartburnings and jealousies about this matter are beyond all conception,' and it was predicted that if Gray and Owen 'came to be officers of the same institution, in a year or two the total result will be a caudal vertebra of each remaining after the manner

¹ 'Life of Bunbury,' vol. i. 1906, p. 217.

² Charles König had been appointed Keeper of the Department of Natural History in 1813, and since 1837 of the Department of Geology and Mineralogy, while John Edward Gray was Keeper of Zoology.