

Mr. Keeping might be quite right that it cannot be a worm trail. But, to conclude from the poor specimen hitherto described, its mode of branching is so very unlike that of a true plant, that it seems very difficult to believe that it should be of vegetable origin—at least until better specimens should have proved it. Concerning *Buthotrephis major*, its different modes of occurrence (usually “as a delicate impression, or as half-compressed solid bodies,” sometimes upright in the sediment, “when the circular sections and tip end of the branches come to resemble rain pittings”) harmonizes so perfectly with the branched trails and burrows of some annelids—which now creep on the surface of the mud, now make burrows in it—that there is no reason why that object should be regarded as something else. And Mr. Keeping has failed to give any satisfactory statement to prove its true plant-nature. Lastly, as to *Myrianites Lapworthii*, it might perhaps in some cases be convenient that such bodies should have their names, but it ought not to be forgotten that the specific value of such a name is *nil*.

STOCKHOLM.

A. G. NATHORST.

#### CHALK MASSES IN THE CROMER DRIFT.

SIR.—To properly deal with all the questions raised by Mr. Searles Wood's letter in the May Number of the GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE, would be more than is possible within the limits of a letter. I may, however, be permitted to observe that if the Chalk Masses, in which term I include the whole, whether of solid or reconstructed chalk, from the western side of the Wolds of Central Lincolnshire, as supposed by Mr. Wood, it ought to be possible to trace them up their origin through a train of such blocks. Has Mr. Wood done this?

There is no difficulty whatever as regards levels in the derivation of the great mass of Chalk Boulders in the Cromer Drift from the Norfolk Chalk. To use a harmless expression, it seems like “taking coals to Newcastle” to bring chalk boulders from Lincolnshire into Norfolk. But it is far from me to deny the possibility of such an origin, if sufficient evidence were adduced in its favour, which I venture to think has not yet been done. Mr. Wood, to say the least, is peculiar in his view that all the large masses are not genuine, but “reconstructed” chalk. In this opinion I differ from him along with some pretty good authorities, both old and new. Does he affirm that the Old Hythe Pinnacle of Chalk, from 70 to 80 ft. high, figured by Sir Chas. Lyell, was of “reconstructed” material, or—what can be tested at the present moment—that the boulder figured in my paper (page 231) is not of solid chalk, or that those shown in Clement Reid's careful survey section are not genuine? In conclusion, I may add that whatever may be the exact locality or localities of the Chalk Cliffs to which the boulders may eventually be traced, it cannot invalidate my reasoning as to the mode in which they have been quarried, detached, rafted off, and stranded.

May 5, 1883.

T. MELLARD READE.