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About thirty years ago there was much talk that geologists ought only to observe and not theorise; and I well remember someone saying that at this rate a man might as well go into a gravel-pit and count the pebbles and describe the colours. How odd is it that anyone should not see that all observation must be for or against some view if it is to be of any service.

Ch. Darwin to W.W. Bates on
November 22, 1860

