

(*b*) *On the foreign localities of this formation.** The Zone of chalk which sweeps across our eastern and southern counties from Yorkshire to Dorsetshire (as will be more particularly described under the proper head), must be considered only as a part of the western edge of a most extensive tract of this formation; which, stretching from the Thames to the Don, occupies the interior of what may be termed the great central basin of Europe; understanding by that denomination, the lower countries bounded by the following primitive and transition mountains and districts. On the north, the primitive districts of Russian Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Scotland; on the west, the transition and primitive chains of Cumberland, Wales, Devonshire, and Brittany; on the south, the primitive mountains branching from the Cevennes in the centre of France, the Alps, with the various insulated ancient groupings of Germany, &c. as the Black forest, the Rhingau and the Vosges, the Bohemian, Thuringian, Saxon, Silesian, and Carpathian mountains; on the east, the Ural and its branches. It is not to be understood that the chalk immediately reposes on these mountains, (for an interval of greater or less breadth, in which the intermediate formations make their appearance, always occurs), but that within the area so circumscribed, an interior area may be traced, throughout which there is every reason to believe the substratum of chalk extends. We proceed to trace it.

It may be observed through the northern coasts of France,† occupying an extent exactly corresponding to its line on the southern coast of England (as will be more particularly shewn in the course of this chapter). At the north of the Seine, its outer edge (which reposes on green sand, having oolite and lias in the neighbourhood) turns south, and so continues to Blois, where the formations above the chalk overlie and conceal its southern extremity: it reappears at Montargis, and turning again north (for the whole chalk district of France forms a sort of Cape protruding to the south of its general line), runs east of Troyes, Rheims, and Valenciennes, having the green sand, oolites, and lias on its east, till it approaches the latter town, where most of these formations are wanting (an instance of want of conformity in their direction), and the chalk, with a few beds of green sand, there called *Turtia*, rest horizontally on the truncated edges of the coal-formation, which extends thence along the banks of the Meuse to Liege and

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† A general account of these formations has been given by Omalius d'Halloy: a translation of his memoir is printed in Thomson's Annals: some particulars are added from private sources.