

How should it be thought, after this, that the huge *mastodons* and gigantic *megatheria*, whose bones have been discovered under ground in North and South America, still exist alive on that continent? How should they have escaped those wandering tribes which continually traverse the country in all directions, and which are themselves aware that these animals no longer exist, since they have invented a fabulous account of their destruction, alleging that they were killed by the Great Spirit, to prevent them from extirpating the human race. But it is evident that this fable has been occasioned by the discovery of the bones, like that of the inhabitants of Siberia with respect to their mammoth, which they pretend to live under ground like the mole, and, like all those of the ancients, about the graves of giants, who were thought by them to have been buried wherever the bones of elephants were discovered.

Thus it may safely be concluded, that if, as we have just said, none of the large species of quadrupeds whose remains are at the present day found in regular mineral strata, bear resemblance to any of the known living species, this is not the effect of mere chance, nor because those species of which we possess nothing but the bones, are still concealed in the deserts, and have hitherto eluded the observation of travellers. On the contrary, this phenomenon must be regarded