

deposits formed on the sides of rivers, or on the bottoms of ancient pools or marshes now dried up, or in the substance of beds of peat, or in the fissures and caverns of some rocks; or, lastly, at small depths below the surface, in places where they may have been buried by the falling down of debris, or even by the hand of man; and their superficial position renders these bones, although the most recent of all, almost always the worst preserved.

It must not, however, be thought that this classification of the various geological positions of fossil remains, is as certain as that of the species, or that it is equally capable of demonstration. There are numerous reasons which prevent this from being the case.

In the first place, all my determinations of species have been made upon the bones themselves, or by means of good figures; whereas it has been impossible for me personally to examine all the places in which these bones have been discovered. I have very frequently been obliged to content myself with vague and ambiguous accounts, given by people who were not themselves well aware of what it was necessary to observe; and, more frequently still, I have been unable to procure any information whatever on the subject.

Secondly, these repositories of organic remains are subject to infinitely greater doubts, than the