

afterwards, and when the limestone which now contains the greater portion of our genera of shells, although different in species from our own, had been deposited.

We must remark, that these coarse limestone strata, which we make use of in Paris for building, are the last banks which denote a long and peaceful flowing of the sea over our own continents. After them we find layers filled with shells and other marine productions; but these consist of shifting layers, sands, marls, sand-stones, soft clays, which rather denote changes more or less sudden, than a quiet settling; and if there be any stony or regular banks of any size beneath or above these moving layers, they generally betray marks of having been deposited from fresh water.

Nearly all the known bones of viviparous quadrupeds are then either in these deposits of fresh water, or in alluvial deposits; and consequently there is reason to believe that these quadrupeds had not begun to exist, or at least, to leave these relics in the layers that we are able to fathom, till after the last retreat but one of the sea, and during that state of things which had preceded its last irruption.

But there is also an order in the arrangement of these bones amongst themselves; and this order bespeaks a very remarkable succession in their species.

First, all the unknown genera, the palæotheria, the anoplotheria, &c. on the relative situation of which we have certain ideas, belong to the oldest of the layers in question; to those which rest immediately above the coarse limestone. It is these, principally, which fill the regular banks, deposited by soft waters or certain shifting beds, very an-