

the molasse of the Dordogne,(1) of a greater magnitude than any now existing; the others are trionyces, or soft tortoises.(2)

This genus, which is easily distinguished by the vermiculated surface of the bones of its shell, and which now only exists in the rivers of hot countries, such as the Nile, the Ganges, and the Orinoco, was very plentiful in the same formation as the palæotheria. There are a vast quantity of these remains at Montmartre,(3) and in the molasse sandstone of the Dordogne, and other gravelly deposits of the south of France.

The fresh water lakes about which these animals lived, and which received their bones, nourished, besides tortoises and crocodiles, some fishes and some shelly animals. All that have been collected are as foreign to our climate, and even as unknown in our present waters, as the palæotheria and other contemporary quadrupeds.(4)

The fish even belong partly to unknown species.

Thus we cannot doubt but that this population, which may be termed that of the middle age,—this first great production of mammifera, has been entirely destroyed; and in fact, wherever we discover their remains, there are above them vast marine deposits, so that the sea must have overwhelmed the countries which these races inhabited, and has covered them for a very considerable period.

Were the countries thus inundated vast in extent? The investigation of the ancient beds formed in their lakes has not yet enabled us to decide this question.

(1) Recherches, vol. v. second part, p. 232.

(2) Ibid. vol. iii. p. 329, and vol. v. second part, p. 222.

(3) Ibid. vol. v. second part, pp. 223—227.

(4) Ibid. vol. iii. p. 338.