

not be if men had then been established in the countries inhabited by these animals. Where then was the human race? Did the last and most perfect work of the Creator exist no where? Did the animals which now accompany him on earth, and of which are no fossil remains to be traced, surround him? Have the lands in which they lived together been swallowed up, when those which they now inhabit, and of which, a great inundation might have destroyed the anterior population, were again left dry? On this head the study of fossils gives us no information, and in this Discourse we must not seek an answer to our question from other sources.

It is certain, that we are at present at least in the midst of a fourth succession of terrestrial animals, and that after the age of reptiles, after that of palæotheria, after that of mammoths, mastodonta and megatheria, the age arrived in which the human species, together with some domestic animals, governs and fertilizes the earth peaceably; and it is only in formations subsequent to this period, in alluvial deposits, in turf-bogs, in the recent concretions, that those bones are found in a fossil state, which all belong to animals known and now existing.

Such are the human skeletons of Guadaloupe, incrustated in a species of travertine with land shells, slate, and fragments of the shells and madrepores of the neighbouring sea; the bones of oxen, deer,

my *Recherches*, v. iv. p. 193, concerning a fragment of a jaw found in the osseous breccia, at Nice.

M. de Schlotheim collected human bones in the fissures of Kœstritz, where there are also rhinoceros bones; but he himself is doubtful as to the epoch of their deposition.