

upon the consideration of the tertiary formations, those deposits of the seas, rivers, and lakes, which are referable to the period immediately antecedent to the existence of the mammoth and mastodon, and subsequent to the deposition and consolidation of the chalk. The discoveries of MM. Cuvier and Brongniart, about twenty years since, in the immediate vicinity of Paris, first directed the attention of geologists to the important series of strata which is now distinguished by the name of tertiary (see p. 18). The animals whose fossil bones abound in the gypsum quarries of Montmartre, and belong to extinct genera of mammalia, were by the genius of Cuvier, again, as it were, called into existence, and the philosophers of Europe saw with astonishment, whole tribes of unknown and extraordinary types of being, disinterred from rocks and mountains, which had hitherto been considered as possessing no scientific interest. Analogous strata, some of a marine, and others of a lacustrine or fluviatile character, have since been discovered in numerous localities in the continents of Europe and America, forming a series so extensive, and requiring such a lapse of time for its production, that the chalk, hitherto considered as comparatively modern, is carried back to a period of immense geological antiquity. The tertiary system may be said to constitute a series of formations which link together the present and the past; for while the most ancient contain organic remains related to those of the