

lying quite low on the Abbeville side of the valley, but above the tidal level, marine shells occur, which indicate an elevation of the region; again, about 100 feet above the valley, on the right bank of the river, and on a sloping surface, is the Moulin-Quignon, where shallow pits exhibit a floor of chalk covered by gravel and sand, accompanied by gravel and marly chalk and flints more or less worn, well-rounded Tertiary flints and pebbles, and fragments of Tertiary sandstone. Such is the general description of a locality which has acquired considerable celebrity in connection with the question of the antiquity of man.

The Quaternary deposits of Moulin-Quignon and the peat-beds of the Somme formerly furnished Cuvier with some of the fossils he described, and in later times chipped flint-implements from the quarries and bogs came into the possession of M. Boucher de Perthes; the statements were received at first not without suspicion—especially on the part of English geologists who were familiar with similar attempts on their own credulity—that some at least of these were manufactured by the workmen of the district. At length, the discovery of a human jaw and tooth in the gravel-pits of St. Acheul, near Amiens, produced a rigorous investigation into the facts, and it seems to have been established to the satisfaction of Mr. Prestwich and his colleagues, that flint-implements and the bones of extinct Mammalia are met with in the same beds, and in situations indicating very great antiquity. In the sloping and irregular deposits overlooking the Somme, the bones of Elephants, Rhinoceros, with land and fresh-water shells of existing species, are found mingled with flint-implements. Shells like those now found in the neighbouring streams and hedge-rows, with the bones of existing quadrupeds, have been obtained from the peat, with flint-tools of more than usual finish, and together with them a few fragments of human bones. Of these reliquiæ, the Celtic memorials lie below the Gallo-Roman; above them, oaks, alders, and walnut trees occur, sometimes rooted, but no succession of a new growth of trees appear.

The theory of the St. Acheul beds is this: they were deposited by fluvial action, and are probably amongst the oldest deposits in which human remains occur, older than the peat-beds of the Somme—but what is their *real* age? Before submitting to the reader the very imperfect answer this question admits of, a glance at the previous discoveries, which tended to give confirmation to the observations just narrated, may be useful.

Implements of stone and flint have been continually turning up during the last century and a half in all parts of the world. In the