

brackish water, and others in the sea, and the conclusion to be drawn from this is, that they largely consist of sediments that were thrown down at the mouth of a great river.

When we consider the original extension of these Eocene river beds, it is also remarkable that they lie within the same general limits as those of the older fluviatile deposits of the Purbeck and Wealden strata, as if, after a long interval, geological history were repeating itself in the same area. In our own day, occupying part of the same district, we have yet a third estuary, that of the Thames, small, but in some respects of more importance to the living world than many an estuary of fifty times its size.

The various subdivisions of the English Eocene strata are given in the Table of British Formations (p. 30), in which the classification of Professor Prestwich is used, which is also that adopted by Sir Charles Lyell in his Manuals. As far, however, as England is concerned, it is more philosophical, as it is certainly more convenient, to divide them into three groups, as follows :

Upper Fresh-water and Estuarine.	{	Hempstead beds.	
		Bembridge „	
		Osborne „	
		Headon „	
Marine.	{	Upper Bagshot Sand.	
		Middle Bagshot.	{ Barton Clay.
		Lower Bagshot.	{ Bracklesham beds.
		London Clay.	
Lower Fresh-water, Estuarine, and Marine.	{	Woolwich and Reading beds.	
		Thanet Sand.	

This classification has the merit of simplicity, being founded on circumstances relating to variations in the physical geography of the time in our area, while the