

quiet continuance of the sea upon our continents. Above them, indeed, there are found formations containing shells and other marine productions; but these consist of collections of transported matters, sand, marls, sandstones, and clays, which rather indicate transportations that have taken place with more or less violence, than strata formed by tranquil deposition; and, if there be some rocky and regular strata of pretty considerable magnitude, beneath or above these transported matters, they generally exhibit indications of having been deposited from fresh water.

Almost all the known bones of viviparous quadrupeds, therefore, have been found either in those fresh-water formations, or in the alluvial formations; and consequently there is every reason to conclude that these quadrupeds have only begun to exist, or, at least, to leave their remains in the strata of our earth, after the last retreat of the sea but one, and during the state of things that preceded its last irruption.

But there is also an order in the disposition of these bones with regard to each other; and this order further announces a very remarkable succession in the appearance of the different species. All the genera which are now unknown, the *Palæotheria*, *Anaplotheria*, &c., with the position of which we are thoroughly acquainted, belong to the oldest of the formations of which we are now