

can be made more definite than it now is, a fossil man is not necessarily preadamitic. He may not even be antediluvian.

Let us now look briefly at the most remarkable examples of organic remains that have been thought to prove the great antiquity of the human race, if not geologically, yet chronologically considered.

In the British Museum, and the Royal Cabinet in Paris, are specimens of human skeletons from Guadaloupe, in solid rock, hard as marble. To a person unfamiliar with rocks, these seem very striking examples of fossil men. But in fact this rock is daily forming in all the West Indian Archipelago, by the cementation of fragments of corals and shells worn off and collected by the waves; and it is not probable that these individual specimens are more than a few hundred years old—the skeletons perhaps of Caribs or Galibis, who fought a battle on the spot where they were found, about the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The most numerous examples of human bones, supposed to be fossil, occur in limestone caverns, buried in mud, or stalagmite, with the bones of other animals, recent and extinct. Such cases are described in Greece, in several places in the south of France, in Belgium, in England, and in Brazil. The bones are usually separated from one another, and mixed up with those of extinct species of rhinoceroses, hyenas, bears, and other terrestrial quadrupeds, as well as with those of living species. Still more recently human remains have been found in the Suabian Alps, in connection with those of the mastodon, though I cannot say whether these occur in caverns.

Now, in regard to all such cases, several considerations should lead us to be very cautious in inferring that man, and the extinct animals found in such circumstances, were contemporaries. For, in the first place, these caverns were, for