molar teeth, I no longer doubted that the fossil elephants were of a species different from the Indian elephant. This idea, which I announced to the Institute in the month of January, 1796, opened to me views entirely new respecting the theory of the earth; and determined me to devote myself to the long researches and to the assiduous labors which have now occupied me for twenty-five years."[27]

We have here, then, the starting-point of those researches concerning extinct animals, which, ever since that time, have attracted so large a share of notice from geologists and from the world. Cuvier could hardly have anticipated the vast storehouse of materials which lay under his feet, ready to supply him occupation of the most intense interest in the career on which he had thus entered. The examination of the strata on which Paris stands, and of which its buildings consist, supplied him with animals, not only different from existing ones, but some of them of great size and curious peculiarities. A careful examination of the remains which these strata contain was undertaken soon after the period we have referred to. In 1802, Defrance had collected several hundreds of undescribed species of shells; and Lamarck[28] began a series of Memoirs upon them; remodelling the whole of Conchology, in order that they might be included in its classifications. And two years afterwards (1804) appears the first of Cuvier's grand series of Memoirs containing the restoration of the vertebrate animals of these strata. In this vast natural museum, and in contributions from other parts of the globe, he discovered the most extraordinary creatures:—the Palæotherium,[29] which is intermediate between the horse and the pig; the Anoplotherium, which stands nearest to the rhinoceros and the tapir; the Megalonix and Megatherium, animals of the sloth tribe, but of the size of the ox and the rhinoceros. The Memoirs which contained these and many other discoveries, set the naturalists to work in every part of Europe.

Another very curious class of animals was brought to light principally by the geologists of England; animals of which the bones, found in the *lias* stratum, were at first supposed to be those of crocodiles. But in 1816,[30] Sir Everard Home says, "In truth, on a consideration of this skeleton, we cannot but be inclined to believe, that among the animals destroyed by the catastrophes of remote antiquity, there had

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[27] *Ossemens Fossiles*, second edit. i. 178.

[28] *Annales du Muséum d'Hist. Nat.* tom. i. p. 308, and the following volumes.

[29] Daubuisson, ii. 411.

[30] *Phil. Trans.* 1816, p. 20.