When we follow the course of the river Couze, from its source in the lake of Chambon, to the termination of the lava-current at Nechers, a distance of thirteen miles, we find that the torrent has in most places cut a deep channel through the lava, the lower portion of which is columnar. In some narrow gorges the water has even had power to remove the entire mass of basaltic rock, though the work of erosion must have been very slow, as the basalt is tough and hard, and one column after another must have been undermined and reduced to pebbles, and then to sand. During the time required for this operation, the perishable cone of Tartaret, composed of sand and ashes, has stood uninjured, proving that no great flood or deluge can have passed over this region in the interval between the eruption of Tartaret and our own times.

If we now return to the section (fig. 676), we may observe that the lava-current of Tartaret, which has diminished greatly in height and volume near its termination, presents here a steep and perpendicular face 25 feet in height towards the river. Beneath it is the alluvium No. 9, consisting of a red sandy clay, which must have covered the bottom of the valley when the current of melted rock flowed down. The bones found in this alluvium, which I obtained myself, consisted of a species of field-mouse, Arvicola, and the molar tooth of an extinct horse, Equus fossilis. The other species, obtained from the same bed, are referable to the genera Sus, Bos, Cervus, Felis, Canis, Martes, Talpa, Sorex, Lepus, Sciurus, Mus, and Logomys, in all no less than fortythree species, all closely allied to recent animals, yet nearly all of them, according to M. Bravard, showing some points of difference, like those which Mr. Owen discovered in the case of the horse above alluded to. The bones, also, of a frog, snake, and lizard, and of several birds, were associated with the fossils before enumerated, and several recent land shells, such as Cyclostoma clegans, Helix hortensis, H. nemoralis, H. lapicida, and Clausilia rugosa. If the animals were drowned by floods, which accompanied the cruptions of the Puy de Tartaret, they would give an exceedingly modern geological date to that event, which must, in that case, have belonged to the Newer-Pliocene, or, perhaps, the Post-Pliocene period. That the current, which has issued from the Puy de Tartarct, may nevertheless be very ancient in reference to the events of human history, we may conclude, not only from the divergence of the mammiferous fauna from that of our day, but from the fact that a Roman bridge of such form and construction as continued in use down to the fifth century, but which may be older, is now seen at a place about a mile and a half from St. Nectaire. This ancient bridge spans the river Couze with two arches, each about 14 feet wide. These arches spring from the lava of Tartarct, on both banks, showing that a ravine precisely like that now existing, had already been excavated by the river through that lava thirteen or fourteen centuries ago.

In Central France there are several hundred minor cones, like that of Tartaret, a great number of which, like Monte Nuovo, near Naples, may have been principally due to a single cruption. Most of these cones