

that of the waist of an ordinary man. The bones of the head appeared somewhat red, as though they were tintured with blood.

“Concerning this animal there are very different reports. The heathens of Jakuti, Tungusi, and Ostiacki, say that they continually, or at least, by reason of the very hard frosts, mostly live underground, where they go backwards and forwards; to confirm which they tell us, that they have often seen the earth heaved up when one of these beasts was upon the march, and after he was passed, the place sink in, and thereby make a deep pit. They further believe, that if this animal comes so near to the surface of the frozen earth as to smell the air, he immediately dies, which they say is the reason that several of them are found dead on the high banks of the river, where they unawares came out of the ground.

“This is the opinion of the Infidels concerning these beasts, which are never seen.

“But the old Siberian Russians affirm, that the Mammuth is very like the Elephant, with this difference only, that the teeth of the former are firmer, and not so straight as those of the latter. They also are of opinion that there were Elephants in this country before the Deluge, when this climate was warmer, and that their drowned bodies, floating on the surface of the water of that flood, were at last washed and forced into subterranean cavities; but that after this universal deluge, the air, which before was warm, was changed to cold, and that these bones have lain frozen in the earth ever since, and so are preserved from putrefaction till they thaw, and come to light, which is no very unreasonable conjecture, though it is not absolutely necessary that this climate should have been warmer before the Flood, since the carcasses of the drowned elephants were very likely to float from other places several hundred miles distant to this country in the great deluge which covered the surface of the whole earth. Some of these teeth, which doubtless have lain the whole summer on the shore, are entirely black and broken, and can never be restored to their former condition. But those which are found in good case, are as good as ivory, and are accordingly transported to all parts of Muscovy, where they are used to make combs, and all other such-like things, instead of ivory.

“The above-mentioned person also told me that he once found two teeth in one head that weighed above twelve Russian pounds, which amount to four hundred German pounds; so that these animals must of necessity be very large, though a great many lesser teeth are found. By all that I could gather from the heathens, no person ever saw one of these beasts alive, or can give any account of