

fera. It is filled with crocodiles and tortoises, but the genera of extinct mammifera which the gypsum contains, are not found in it: they evidently did not exist in the country when these clays and lignites were formed.

This fresh water formation, the oldest which has been distinguished in our neighbourhood, and which supports all the formations which we have just enumerated, is itself supported and embraced on all sides by the chalk, an immense formation, both as to thickness and extent, which shews itself in very distant countries, such as Pomerania and Poland; but which, in our vicinity, reigns with a sort of continuity in Berri, Champagne, Picardy, Upper Normandy, and a part of England, and thus forms a great circle, or rather a great basin, in which the deposits of which we have been speaking are contained, but of which they also cover the edges in the places where they were less elevated.

In fact, it is not in our basin only that these various formations have been deposited. In the other countries where the surface of the chalk presented similar cavities for them; in those even where there was no chalk, and where the older formations alone presented themselves as supports, circumstances often led to the formation of deposits more or less similar to ours, and containing the same organic bodies.