ciently formed, and generally composed of sand and round flints, and which were probably the first alluvial deposites of the ancient world. We find with them certain lost species of known kinds, but in small numbers, and some oviparous quadrupeds and fishes, which all appear in fresh water. The beds which contain them are always more or less covered over by the shifting beds, filled with shells and other marine productions.

The most celebrated of these unknown species, which belong to the known kinds, or to kinds very much resembling those that are known, such as the fossil elephant, the rhinoceros, the hippopotamus, and the mastodons, are not found amongst the more ancient kinds. It is only in the shifting layers that they are discovered, sometimes with sea-shells, sometimes with the shells of fresh water, but never in the regular stony beds. All that is found with these species is either unknown as they are, or at least doubtful.

In fact, the bones of the species which appear the same as ours, only present themselves in the last deposites of alluvions formed on the banks of the rivers, or on the beds of old ponds, or dried marshes, or in the depths of turf layers, or in the clefts and hollows of certain rocks, or finally, at a short distance from the surface, in places where they may have been embedded by casualties or by the hand of man; and their superficial position makes these bones, the most recent of any, almost always in the worst state of preservation. It must not, however, be supposed that this classifying of different relative situations is as clear as that of the species, nor that it can have a demonstrative character equally distinct; there are manifest causes why it cannot be so.