

ternal surface is smooth; in others it is marked with short intercepted linear grooves, resembling the eggs of some of the Struthionidæ, but distinct from all known recent types. In this valuable collection only one bone of a mammal has been detected, namely, *the femur of a dog*.

An interesting memoir on the probable geological position and age of the ornithic bone deposits of New Zealand, by Dr. Mantell, based on the observations of his enterprising son, is published in the Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society of London (1848). It appears that in many instances the bones are imbedded in sand and clay, which lie beneath a thick deposit of volcanic detritus, and rest on an argillaceous stratum abounding in marine shells. The specimens found in the rivers and streams have been washed out of their banks by the currents which now flow through channels from ten to thirty feet deep, formed in the more ancient alluvial soil. Dr. Mantell concludes that the islands of New Zealand were densely peopled at a period geologically recent, though historically remote, by tribes of gigantic brevipennate birds allied to the ostrich tribe, all, or almost all, of species and genera now extinct; and that, subsequently to the formation of the most ancient ornithic deposit, the sea-coast has been elevated from fifty to one hundred feet above its original level; hence the terraces of shingle and loam which now skirt the maritime districts. The existing rivers and mountain torrents flow in deep gulleys which they have eroded in the course of centuries in these pleistocene strata, in like manner as the river courses of Auvergne, in Central France, are excavated in the mammiferous tertiary deposits of that country. The last of the gigantic birds were probably exterminated, like the dodo, by human agency: some small species allied to the apteryx may possibly be met with in the unexplored parts of the middle island.

**THE DODO.**—A most valuable and highly interesting history of the dodo and its kindred\* has recently appeared, in which the history, affinities, and osteology of the *Dodo*, *Solitaire*, and other extinct birds of the islands Mauritius, Rodriguez, and Bourbon are admirably elucidated by H. G. Strickland (of Oxford), and Dr. G. A. Melville. The historical part is by the former, the osteological and physiological portion by the latter eminent anatomist. We would earnestly recommend the reader interested in the most perfect history that has ever appeared, of the extinction of a race of large animals, of which thousands existed but three centuries ago, to refer to the original work. We have only space enough to state that the authors have proved, upon the most incontrovertible evidence, that the dodo was neither a vulture, ostrich, nor galline, as previous anatomists supposed, but a *frugiverous pigeon*.

\* *The Dodo and its Kindred*. By Messrs. Strickland and Melville. 1 vol. 4to with numerous plates. Reeves, London, 1848.