

Sheerness; but in order that such deposits should resemble, in geological position, the Menchecourt beds, they must be raised ten or fifteen feet above their present level, and be partially eroded. Such erosion they would not fail to suffer during the process of upheaval, because the Thames would scour out its bed, and not alter its position relatively to the sea, while the land was gradually rising.

Before the canal was made at Abbeville, the tide was perceptible in the Somme for some distance above that city. It would only require, therefore, a slight subsidence to allow the salt water to reach Menchecourt, as it did in the post-pliocene period. As a stratum containing exclusively land and fresh-water shells usually underlies the fluvio-marine sands at Menchecourt, it seems that the river first prevailed there, after which the land subsided; and then there was an upheaval which raised the country to a greater height than that at which it now stands, after which there was a second sinking, indicated by the position of the peat, as already explained (p. 111). All these changes happened since Man first inhabited this region.

At several places in the environs of Abbeville there are fluviatile deposits at a higher level by fifty feet than the uppermost beds at Menchecourt, resting in like manner on the chalk. One of these occurs in the suburbs of the city at Moulin Quignon, one hundred feet above the Somme and on the same side of the valley as Menchecourt, and containing flint implements of the same antique type and the bones of elephants; but no marine shells have been found there, nor in any gravel or sand at higher elevations than the Menchecourt marine shells.

It has been a matter of discussion among geologists whether the higher or the lower sands and gravels of the Somme valley are the more ancient. As a general rule, when there are alluvial formations of different ages in the same valley, those