

become. In spite of the oft-repeated and undoubted testimony of numerous travellers, we can scarcely credit the statements made respecting some of the islands of the glacial sea near the poles, situated opposite the mouth of the Lena and of the Indighirka. Here, for example, is an extract from "Billing's Voyage" concerning these isles: "The whole island (which is about thirty-three leagues in length), except three or four small rocky mountains, is a mixture of ice and sand; and as the shores fall, from the heat of the sun's thawing them, the tusks and bones of the mammoth are found in great abundance. To use Chvoynoff's own expression, the island is formed of the bones of this extraordinary animal, mixed with the horns and heads of the buffalo, or something like it, and some horns of the rhinoceros."

New Siberia and the Lächow Islands off the mouth of the river Lena, are, for the most part, only an agglomeration of sand, ice, and Elephants' teeth. At every tempest the sea casts ashore new quantities of mammoths' tusks, and the inhabitants of Siberia carry on a profitable commerce in this fossil ivory. Every year, during the summer, innumerable fishermen's barks direct their course towards this *isle of bones*; and, during winter, immense caravans take the same route, all the convoys drawn by dogs, returning charged with the tusks of the Mammoth, each weighing from 150 to 200 pounds. The fossil ivory thus withdrawn from the frozen north is imported into China and Europe, where it is employed for the same purposes as ordinary ivory, which is furnished, as we know, by the existing Elephant and Hippopotamus of Africa and Asia.

The *Isle of Bones* has served as a quarry of this valuable material, for export to China, for 500 years; and it has been exported to Europe for upwards of 100. But the supply from these strange diggings apparently remains practically undiminished. What a number of accumulated generations of these bones and tusks does not this profusion imply!

It was in Siberia that the fossil Elephant received the name of the *Mammoth*, and its tusks that of *mammoth horns*. The celebrated Russian savant, Pallas, who gave the first systematic description of the Mammoth, asserts that the name is derived from the word *mama*, which in the Tartar idiom signifies the *earth*. According to others, the name is derived from *behemoth*, mentioned in the Book of Job; or from the epithet *mahemoth*, which the Arabs add to the word "elephant," to designate one of unusual size. A curious circumstance enough is, that this same legend of an animal living exclusively underground, exists amongst the Chinese. They call it *tien-schu*, and we