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Mantell, 1848

THE

QUARTERLY JOURNAL

OF THE

GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

EDITED BY

THE ASSISTANT-SECRETARY OF THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
284330
U. S. NATIONAL MUSEUM.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

1848.

PART THE FIRST.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.

PARIS:—FRIED. KLINCKSIECK, 11 RUE DE LILLE; BAUDRY, 9 RUE DU COQ, PRES LE LOUVRE; LEIPZIG, T. O. WEIGEL.

NEW YORK:—WILEY AND PUTNAM, 161 BROADWAY.

SOLD ALSO AT THE APARTMENTS OF THE SOCIETY.

MDCCCXLVIII.

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the New Zealanders will appear to have been of very ancient date, and not to have originated from the want of animal food on account of the extinction of the Moas, as Professor Owen so ingeniously and indulgently suggested in extenuation of this horrid practice by so intelligent a race as the Maoris.

III. *General Conclusions.*—From the scattered facts which I have thus brought together in order to throw some light on a question of such deep palæontological interest—upon the principle that the feeblest rays, when concentrated into a focus, will produce some degree of illumination—I think we may safely infer that the islands of New Zealand were densely peopled at a period geologically recent, by tribes of gigantic ostrich-like birds, of species and genera which have long since been obliterated from the face of the earth; and that subsequently to this "*Age of Struthionidæ*," the land has undergone those physical changes, by which the areas occupied by the ornithic ossiferous deposits, and the beds of shingle and loam, which now form terraces from 50 to 100 feet above the sea-level, were elevated to their present positions. This inference seems to be corroborated by the fact that the existing mountain-torrents and rivers flow in deep channels which they have eroded in these pleistocene deposits; in like manner as the rivers of Auvergne have excavated their course through the mammiferous tertiary strata of that country.

The accounts given by Mr. Colenso, the Rev. H. Taylor and others, of the exposure of the bone-bed in the channels of the mountain-streams, and of the bones being left on the river-shoals after heavy floods, remind us of the conditions under which the mammalian fossils of the Sub-Himalayas were first brought under the notice of our eminent countrymen, Major Cautley and Dr. Falconer. And in New Zealand, as in India, the fossil remains of extinct animals are associated with those of existing genera; and the land is still inhabited by diminutive representative forms of the colossal beings which flourished in the pleistocene, or early human epoch; for the Apteryx and the Porphurio may be regarded as the living types of the Moa and the Notornis.

I do not deem it necessary to enlarge on the question whether the Dinornis and Palapteryx still exist in New Zealand; on this point I would only remark, that Mr. Colenso, who was the *first* observer that investigated the nature of the fossil remains with due care and the requisite scientific knowledge, (having determined the struthious affinities of the birds to which the bones belonged, and pointed out their remarkable characters, ere any intelligence could have reached him of the result of Professor Owen's examination of the specimens transmitted to this country,) has given, in his masterly paper before quoted, very cogent reasons for the belief that none of the true Moas exist, though it is probable the last of the race were exterminated by the early inhabitants of these islands.

But whatever may be the result of future researches as to the relative age of the ossiferous deposits, or the existence or extinction of the colossal bipeds whose relics are before us, this fact cannot be questioned—the vast preponderance of the class of birds which pre-