

DESCRIPTION OF THE FRONTISPIECE.

The Country of the Iguanodon, restored from the Geological Discoveries of the Author. By JOHN MARTIN, Esq. K.L.

The mode of induction by which the geologist and comparative anatomist are enabled to ascertain the form and structure of animals and plants which no longer exist on the face of the earth, and even the nature of the countries which they inhabited, are explained in the following pages. The researches of the Author in the wealden formation (p. 344) of the south-east of England, furnished the materials from which the eminent painter of "BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST," composed the striking picture that forms so splendid an embellishment to this Work.

The data upon which the restorations are founded are described in the Fourth Lecture (see p. 404). The picture represents a country clothed with a tropical vegetation, peopled by reptiles of colossal magnitude, and traversed by a river, which is seen to empty itself into the sea, in the distance. Oolitic rocks (p. 361) form the heights and cliffs with which the landscape is diversified. The vegetation consists of the trees and plants whose fossil remains have been discovered in Tilgate Forest (p. 369); namely, palms, arborescent ferns, clathrarizæ, and coniferous tree; while the lesser plants, as the cycadeæ, (p. 365) and ferns (pp. 369—371), are distributed over the foreground.

The reptiles comprise the iguanodon (p. 389), hylæosaurus (p. 401), megalosaurus (p. 389), crocodiles (p. 385), and turtles (p. 384). An iguanodon attacked by a megalosaurus and crocodile, constitutes the principal group; in the middle distance an iguanodon and hylæosaurus are preparing for an encounter; a solitary pterodactyle, or flying reptile (p. 403), with its wings partly expanded, forms a conspicuous object in the foreground; while turtles are seen crawling on the banks of the river. Ammonites and other shells of the Portland oolite, which is the foundation rock of the country, are strewn on the shore. Wading birds allied to the heron (p. 403), should have been introduced to render the fauna of the iguanodon country complete.

The vigour and beauty of this successful conception of the distinguished artist are equalled by the fidelity of its details.