

subsidence of the ground to have taken place from time to time during the deposition of the layers on which the birds walked. The tracks are too well defined and distinct to have been made under water: there are clear indications of joints in the different toes; and there is generally such a deviation from a straight line in any three prints following each other as is observable in the trifid marks which birds leave on the sands of the sea-coast. The birds must have been of various sizes, from that of a small sand-piper to bipeds larger than the ostrich; and it is highly interesting to remark how regularly the distance between the footsteps increases or diminishes in proportion to the size of the foot-marks. In some of the most diminutive, for example, they are no more than three inches apart, but in the case of the largest (*Ornithichnites gigas*) they are from four to six feet. The length of the foot in the huge species last mentioned is in some instances no less than nineteen inches. Its magnitude being nearly twofold that of the African ostrich, as estimated by the foot (*ex pede Herculem*), and the acknowledged antiquity of the rock, disinclined many naturalists to adopt the views of Professor Hitchcock, when he referred the markings to extinct birds; but the discovery of the bones of the Moa or Dinornis of New Zealand, described by Mr. Owen, proved the existence, at no remote period, of feathered bipeds nearly as gigantic, and reconciled the zoologist at least to the credibility of the fact, however marvellous.

The waters of the Connecticut being low, I had an opportunity of seeing a ledge of rock of red shale laid bare, on which were imprinted a single line of nine footsteps of *Ornithichnites giganteus*, turning alter-