

air, and shoals of no less monstrous Ichthyosauri and Plesiosauri swarming in the ocean, and gigantic Crocodiles, and Tortoises crawling on the shores of the primæval lakes and rivers, air, sea, and land must have been strangely tenanted in these early periods of our infant world.”\*

As the most obvious feature of these fossil reptiles is the presence of organs of flight, it is natural to look for the peculiarities of the Bird or Bat, in the structure of their component bones. All attempts, however, to identify them with Birds are stopped at once by the fact of their having teeth in the beak, resembling those of reptiles: the form of a single bone, the os quadratum, enabled Cuvier to pronounce at once that the creature was a Lizard: but a Lizard possessing wings exists not in the present creation, and is to be found only among the Dragons of romance and heraldry;† while a moment’s comparison of the head and teeth

\* Geol. Trans. Lond. N. S. Vol. III. part 1.

† One diminutive living species of Lizard, (the *Draco volans*, see Pl. 22, L.) differs from all other Saurians, in having an appearance of imperfect wings, produced by a membranous expansion of the skin over the false ribs which project almost horizontally from the back; the membrane expanded by these false ribs, acts like a parachute to support the animal in leaping from tree to tree, but has no power to beat the air, or become an instrument of true flight, like the arm or wing of Birds and Bats; the arm or fore leg of the *Draco volans* differs not from that of common Lizards.