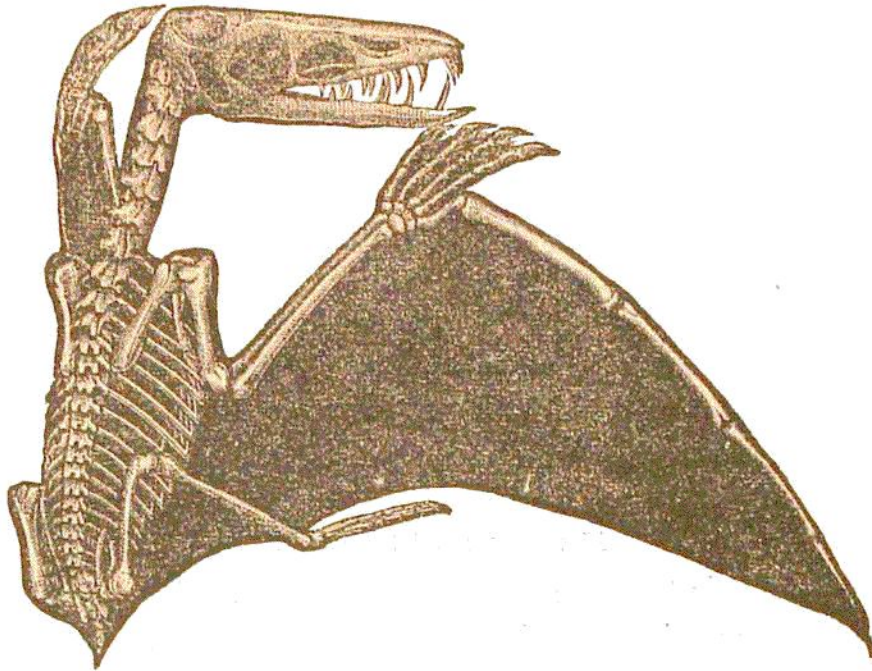


In Fig. 297, the membrane as it is supposed to have existed, is attached to the elongated finger. Some of them were so large that the distance from tip to tip of their wings, when spread, was eighteen or twenty feet.

Fig. 297.



*Pterodactylus crassirostris.*

This animal had the head and neck of a bird, the mouth of a reptile, the wings of a bat, and the body and tail of a mammifer. Its teeth, as well as other parts of its structure, show that it could not have been a bird; and its osteological characters separate it from the tribe of bats. But in many respects it had the characters of a reptile. These animals were doubtless able to fly like the bat, while the fingers with claws projecting from their wings enabled them to creep or climb. When their wings were folded, they could, perhaps, walk on two feet; and it is most likely, also, they could swim. Their eyes were enormously large; so that they could seek their prey in the night. They probably fed on insects chiefly; though perhaps, also, they had the power of diving for fish.

"Thus," says Dr. Buckland, "like Milton's fiend, all qualified for all services, and all elements, the pterodactyle was a fit companion for the kindred reptiles that swarmed in the seas, or crawled on the shores of a turbulent planet."

"The Fiend,  
O'er bog, or steep, through straight, rough, dense, or rare,  
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,  
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies."

*Paradise Lost*, Book 2, line 947.

"With flocks of such-like creatures flying in the air, and shoals of no less