

And made wide shadow under bulksome waist,
As mountain doth the valley overcaste ;
And trailing scaly tails did rear afore
Bodies all monstrous, horribill, and vaste.'

Let us, however, ere we part for the evening, adventure a short walk into the wilds of the Oolite, in that portion of space now occupied on the surface of the globe by the north-eastern hills of Sutherland, where they abut on the precipitous Ord.

We stand on an elevated wood-covered ridge, that on the one hand overlooks the blue sea, and descends on the other towards a broad river, beyond which there spreads a wide expanse of a mountainous, forest-covered country. The higher and more distant hills are dark with pines ; and, save that the sun, already low in the sky, is flinging athwart them his yellow light, and gilding, high over shaded dells and the deeper valleys, cliff, and copse, and bare mossy summit, the general colouring of the background would be blue and cold. But the ray falls bright and warm on the rich vegetation around us,—tree ferns, and tall club-mosses, and graceful palms, and the strangely-proportioned cycadaceæ, whose leaves seem fronds of the bracken fixed upon decapitated stumps ; and along the banks of the river we see tall, intensely green hedges of the feathered equisetaceæ. Brown cones and withered spiky leaves strew the ground ; and scarce a hundred yards away there is a noble Araucarian, that raises, sphere-like, its proud head more than a hundred feet over its fellows, and whose trunk, bedewed with odoriferous balsam, glistens to the sun. The calm stillness of the air makes itself faintly audible in the drowsy hum of insects ; there is a gorgeous light-poised dragon-fly darting hither and thither through the minuter gnat-like groups : it settles for a moment on one of the lesser ferns, and a small insectivorous creature, scarce larger than a rat, issues noiselessly from its hole, and creeps stealthily to-