

wards it. But there is the whirr of wings heard overhead, and lo! a monster descends, and the little mammal starts back into its hole. 'Tis a winged dragon of the Oolite, a carnivorous reptile, keen of eye and sharp of tooth, and that to the head and jaws of the crocodile adds the neck of a bird, the tail of an ordinary mammal, and that floats through the air on leathern wings resembling those of the great vampire bat. We have seen, in the minute, rat-like creature, one of the two known mammals of this vast land of the Oolite,—the insect-eating *Amphitherium*; and in the flying reptile, one of its strangely organized *Pterodactyls*.

But hark! what sounds are these? Tramp, tramp, tramp,—crash, crash. Tree-fern and club-moss, cycas and zamia, yield to the force and momentum of some immense reptile, and the colossal *Iguanodon* breaks through. He is tall as the tallest elephant, but from tail to snout greatly more than twice as long; bears, like the rhinoceros, a short horn on his snout; and has his jaws thickly implanted with saw-like teeth. But, though formidable from his great weight and strength, he possesses the comparative inoffensiveness of the herbivorous animals; and, with no desire to attack, and no necessity to defend, he moves slowly onward, deliberately munching, as he passes, the succulent stems of the cycadaceæ. The sun is fast sinking, and, as the light thickens, the reaches of the neighbouring river display their frequent dimples, and ever and anon long scaly backs are raised over its surface. Its numerous crocodileans are astir; and now they quit the stream, and we see its thick hedge-like lines of equisetaceæ open and again close, as they rustle through, to scour, in quest of prey, the dank meadows that line its banks. There are tortoises that will this evening find their protecting armour of carapace and plastron all too weak, and close their long lives of centuries. And now we saunter downwards to the shore, and see the ground-swell breaking white in the calm against ridges of coral scarce less white. The