

shores are strewn with shells of pearl,—the whorled Ammonite and the Nautilus; and amid the gleam of ganoidal scales, reflected from the green depths beyond, we may see the phosphoric trail of the Belemnite, and its path is over shells of strange form and name,—the sedentary Gryphæa, the Perna, and the Plagiostoma.

But lo! yet another monster. A snake-like form, surmounted by a crocodilean head, rises high out of the water within yonder coral ledge, and the fiery sinister eyes peer inquiringly round, as if in quest of prey. The body is but dimly seen; but it is short and bulky compared with the swan-like neck, and mounted on paddles instead of limbs; so that the entire creature, wholly unlike anything which now exists, has been likened to a boa-constrictor threaded through the body of a turtle. We have looked upon the *Plesiosaurus*. And now outside the ledge there is a huge crocodilean head raised; and a monstrous eye, huger than that of any other living creature,—for it measures a full foot across,—glares upon the slimmer and less powerful reptile, and in an instant the long neck and small head disappear. That monster of the immense eye,—an eye so constructed that its focus can be altered at will, and made to comprise either near or distant objects, and the organ itself adapted either to examine microscopically or to explore as a telescope,—is another bepaddled reptile of the sea, the *Ichthyosaurus* or fish-lizard. But the night comes on, and the shadows of the woods and rocks deepen: there are uncouth sounds along the beach and in the forest; and new monsters of yet stranger shape are dimly discovered moving amid the uncertain gloom. Reptiles, reptiles, reptiles,—flying, swimming, waddling, walking;—the age is that of the cold-blooded, ungenial reptile; and, save in the dwarf and inferior forms of the marsupials and insectivora, not one of the honest mammals has yet appeared. And now the moon rises in clouded majesty; and now her red wake