

golden wheat, the thronging population—these all were scenes and objects still shut up in the silence and night of the far-distant future. An intelligent being may have stood on the bank of the river, and pictured to himself the shifting scenes of the next half million of years, as we now portray to imagination the expansion of American civilization, and its destined continental grasp of empire a hundred years hence; but no intelligent hand impressed its influence upon the features fashioned by Nature. An occasional voice of monstrous Deinosaur broke the dreadful silence of the broad continent. No song of bird was heard in the grove, and rarely the hum of insect in the air. Bland as the breezes were, and seductive the climate, it was not a fit place for man to be in. Frogs and salamanders must be his pets—lizards and crocodiles his domestic animals. Providence reserved him for a more finished condition of the world.