

was marine is equally so, from the remains with which it is universally associated; that it may have occasionally visited the shore, the resemblance of its extremities to the turtle may lead us to conjecture; its motion, however, must have been very awkward on land; its long neck must have impeded its progress through the water, presenting a striking contrast to the organisation which so admirably fits the Ichthyosaurus for cutting through the waves. May it not, therefore, be concluded that it swam on or near the surface, arching back its long neck like the swan, and occasionally darting it down at the fish which happened to float within its reach? It may, perhaps, have lurked in shallow water along the coasts, concealed among the seaweeds, and, raising its nostrils to the surface from a considerable depth, may have found a secure retreat from the assaults of dangerous enemies, while the length and flexibility of its neck may have compensated for the want of strength in its jaws, and incapacity for swift motion through the water, by the suddenness and agility of the attack they enabled it to make on every animal fitted to become its prey."

The Plesiosaurus was first described by the Rev. W. D. Conybeare and Sir Henry De la Beche, in the "Geological Society's Transactions" for 1821, and a restoration of *P. dolichodeirus*, the most common of these fossils, appeared in the same work for 1824. The first specimen was discovered, as the Ichthyosaurus had been previously, in the Lias of Lyme Regis; since then other individuals and species have been found in the same geological formation in various parts of England, Ireland, France, and Germany, and with such variations of structure that Professor Owen has felt himself justified in recording sixteen distinct species, of which we have represented *P. dolichodeirus* (Fig. 102), as restored by Conybeare, and *P. macrocephalus* (Fig. 104), with its skeleton, as moulded from the limestone of Lyme Regis, which has been placed in the Palæontological Gallery of the British Museum.

The Plesiosaurus was scarcely so large as the Ichthyosaurus. The specimen of *I. platydon* in the British Museum probably belonged to an animal four-and-twenty feet long, and some are said to indicate thirty feet, while there are species of Plesiosauri measuring eighteen and twenty, the largest known specimen of *Plesiosaurus Cramptoni* found in the lias of Yorkshire, and now in the Museum of the Royal Society of Dublin, being twenty-two feet four inches in length. On the opposite page (PLATE XV.) an attempt is made to represent these grand reptiles of the Lias in their native element, and as they lived.