

reptiles. The Museum contains perhaps the finest collection of these in the world. The earlier Tertiary introduces us to the strange mammals of the Paris Basin, — the same system, in its second stage, to the *Dinotherium* of Darmstadt and the *Megatherium* of Buenos Ayres. A still later period brings before us the great elephantine family, once so widely distributed over the globe : we arrive at a monstrous skeleton, entire from head to heel : 'tis that of the gigantic mastodon of North America, — a creature that may have been contemporary with the earlier hunter tribes of the New World ; and just beside it, last in the long series, we find the human skeleton of Guadaloupe. Mysterious frame-work of bone locked up in the solid marble, — unwonted prisoner of the rock ! — an irresistible voice shall yet call thee from out the stony matrix. The other organisms, thy partners in the show, are incarcerated in the lime forever, — thou but for a term. How strangely has the destiny of the race to which thou belongest re-stamped with new meanings the old phenomena of creation ! I marked, as I passed along, the prints of numerous rain-drops indented in a slab of sandstone. And the entire record, from the earliest to the latest times, is a record of death. When that rain-shower descended, myriads of ages ago, at the close of the Palæozoic period, the cloud, just where it fronted the sun, must have exhibited its bow of many colors ; and then, as now, nature, made vital in the inferior animals, would have clung to life with the instinct of self-preservation, and shrunk with dismay and terror from the approach of death. But the prismatic bow strided across the gloom, in blind obedience to a mere optical law, bearing inscribed on its gorgeous arch no occult meaning ; and death, whether by violence or decay, formed in the general economy but a clearing process, through which the fundamental law of increase found space to operate. But when thou wert living,