

derable numbers shortly after the great eight-foot coal-seam of the Dalkeith basin had been formed. In another part of the pit I found foot-tracks of apparently the same animal in equal abundance, but still less distinct in their state of keeping. But they bore testimony with the others to the comparative abundance of reptilian life at an early period, when the coal-bearing strata of the empire were little more than half-deposited. It was not, however, until the Permian and Triassic systems had come to a close, and even the earlier ages of the Oolitic system had passed away, that the class received its fullest development in creation. And certainly very wonderful was the development which it then did receive. Reptiles became everywhere the lords and masters of this lower world. When any class of the air-breathing vertebrates is very largely developed, we find it taking possession of all the three old terrestrial elements,—earth, air, and water. The human period, for instance, like that which immediately preceded it, is peculiarly a period of mammals; and we find the class, *free*, if I may so express myself, of the three elements, disputing possession of the sea with the fishes, in its Cetaceans, its seals, and its sea-lions, and of the air with the birds, in its numerous genera of the bat family. Further, not until the great mammaliferous period is fairly ushered in do either the bats or the whales make their appearance in creation. Remains of Oolitic reptiles have been mistaken in more than one instance for those of Cetacea; but it is now generally held that the earliest known specimens of the family belong to the Tertiary ages, while those of the oldest bats occur in the Eocene of the Paris Basin, associated with the bones of dolphins, lamantines, and morses. Now, in the times of the Oolite it was the reptilian class that possessed itself of all the elements. Its gigantic enaliosaurs—huge reptilian *whales* mounted on paddles—were the tyrants of the ocean, and must have reigned supreme over the already