

“contain species peculiar to each ; insomuch that whenever large countries of this description have been discovered, which their situation had kept isolated from the rest of the world, the class of quadrupeds which they contained has been found extremely different from any that had existed elsewhere. Thus, when the Spaniards first penetrated into South America, they did not find a single species of quadruped the same as any of Europe, Asia, or Africa. The puma, the jaguar, the tapir, the cabiai, the lama, the vicuna, the sloths, the armadilloes, the opossums, and the whole tribe of sapajous, were to them entirely new animals, of which they had no idea. Similar circumstances have occurred in our own time, when the coasts of New Holland and the adjacent islands were first explored. The various species of kangaroo, phascolomys, dasyurus, and perameles, the flying phalangers, the ornithorynchi, and echidnæ, have astonished naturalists by the strangeness of their conformations, which presented proportions contrary to all former rules, and were incapable of being arranged under any of the systems then in use.” New Zealand, though singularly devoid of indigenous mammals and reptiles,—for the only native mammal seems to be a peculiar species of rat, and the only native reptile a small, harmless lizard,—has a scarce less remarkable fauna than either of these great continents. It consists almost exclusively of birds, some of them so ill-provided with wings, that, like the *wika* of the natives, they can only run along the ground. And it is a most significant fact, that both in the two great continents and the New Zealand islands there existed, in the later geologic ages, extinct faunas that bore the peculiar generic characters by which their recent ones are still distinguished. The sloths and armadilloes of South America had their gigantic predecessors in the enormous megatherium and mylodon, and the strongly-armed glyptodon ; the kangaroos and wombats of Australia had their extinct predecessors in a kangaroo