

re-animated the animals, it has re-constructed the theatre of their existence. We see the British Islands now a straggling archipelago, and then the mouth of a vast river, of which the continent is lost; for, says Professor Ramsay, "We are not of necessity to consider Great Britain as having always been an island; it is an accident that it is an island now, and it has been an island many times before." In the Tertiary epoch we see it surrounded, then, by shallow seas swarming with numerous forms of animal life; islands covered with bushy Palms; banks on which Turtles basked in the sun; vast basins of fresh or brackish water, in which the tide made itself felt, and which abounded with various species of sharks; rivers in which Crocodiles increased and multiplied; woods which sheltered numerous Mammals and some Serpents of large size; fresh-water lakes which received the spoils of numerous shells. Dry land had increased immensely. Groups of ancient isles we have seen united and become continents, with lakes, bays, and perhaps inland seas. Gigantic Elephants, vastly larger than any now existing, close the epoch, and probably usher in the succeeding one; for we are not to suppose any sudden break to distinguish one period from another in Nature, although it is convenient to arrange them so for the purposes of description. If we may judge from their remains, these animals must have existed in great numbers, for it is stated that on the coast of Norfolk alone the fishermen, in trawling for oysters, dredged up between 1820 and 1833, no less than 2,000 molar teeth of Elephants. If we consider how slowly these animals multiply, these quarries of ivory, as we may call them, must have required many centuries for their production and accumulation.

The same lakes and rivers were at this time occupied, also, by the Hippopotamus, as large and as formidably armed as that now inhabiting the African solitudes; also the two-horned Rhinoceros; and three species of Bos, one of which was hairy and bore a mane. Some Deer of gigantic size, as compared with living species, bounded over the plains. In the same savanahs lived the Reindeer, the Stag, a Horse of small size, the Ass, the Bear, and the Roe, for Mammals had succeeded the Ichthyosauri of a former age. Nevertheless, the epoch had its tyrants also. A Lion, as large as the largest of the Lions of Africa, hunted its prey in the British jungles. Another animal of the feline race, the *Machairodus* (Fig. 179), was probably the most ferocious and destructive of Carnivora; bands of Hyænas and a terrible Bear, surpassing in size that of the Rocky Mountains, had established themselves in the caverns; two species of Beaver made their appearance on the scene.