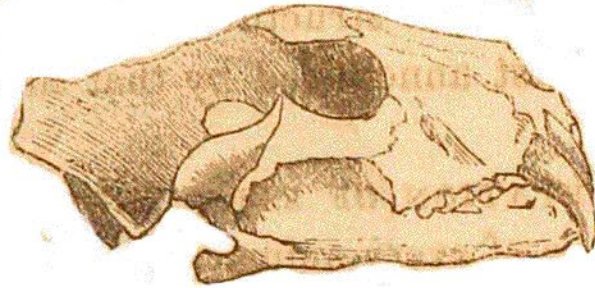


perform, they afford the most simple and striking illustration of the principles above enunciated.



TAB. 18.—SKULL OF THE BENGAL TIGER.

12. OSTEOLOGICAL CHARACTERS OF THE CARNIVORA.—If we examine the jaws of the skulls before us, those of a Bengal tiger, and of a cat, we perceive that there are cutting teeth in front,—sharp fangs on the sides,—and molar, bruising, or crushing teeth, in the back part. The molar rise into sharp lanciform points, and over-lap each other in the upper and lower jaw; like the edges of a pair of shears; and the teeth are externally covered with a thick crust of enamel. This is evidently an apparatus for tearing and cutting flesh, or for cracking bones; but is not suited for grinding the stalks or seeds of vegetables. The jaws fit together by a transverse process, which moves in a corresponding depression in the skull, like a hinge (Tab. 18); they open and shut like shears, but admit of no grinding motion; this, then, is such an articulation as is adapted for a carnivorous animal; and every part of this instrument is admirably fitted for its office.