

remains of this family have been found ; the wealden contains marine, land, and freshwater species ; and the chalk several marine turtles ; bones of a trionyx have been found in the Kentish chalk, by Mr. W. H. Bensted. In the tertiary deposits, both marine and fresh-water turtles occur : they are associated with the Sivatherium in the Sub-Himalayas—with the mastodon in the Burmese Empire—with palæotheria in France—and with fruits and tropical plants in Sheppey ; their bones and eggs are daily becoming imbedded in the recent conglomerate of the Isle of Ascension (page 78).

30. CROCODILES.—This family contains the only living reptiles that approach in magnitude to the colossal forms of the fossil kingdom. The Egyptian crocodile, or alligator, is known to attain a large size ; and the rivers of India are inhabited by *gavials* of enormous bulk, sometimes nearly thirty feet in length. The gavials are distinguished by the great length and slenderness of the beak, or muzzle. The nature of the teeth of these animals, and their mode of increase and renovation, have already been described (page 385). The vertebræ, or bones of the back, are convex behind, and concave in front, fitting into each other, like a ball and socket ; a construction rarely found in the fossil species. Almost all the vertebræ of crocodiles from the wealden, are either flat or slightly concave at both extremities ; and this character prevails, not only in the fossil animals of this family, but also