

commonly found in the alimentary canal of such as are brought to this country dead; and living birds and quadrupeds also constitute the favourite food of the Pythons and Boæ of similar dimensions which are exhibited in our menageries."* The fossil remains both of birds and warm-blooded quadrupeds are found associated with those of Serpents in the Isle of Sheppey. From the London Clay at Bracklesham Bay, on the Sussex Coast, several ophidian vertebræ have been obtained by Mr. Dixon, and Mr. G. A. Coombe, of Arundel, that must have belonged to serpents upwards of twenty feet in length.

The vertebræ of Serpents are distinguished from those of other reptiles by a transversely oblong anterior concavity, forming a deep cup, and a corresponding posterior convexity or ball; by the interlocking of the projecting posterior oblique processes with the anterior pair; and by the oblong tubercle on each side of the anterior part of the body of the vertebra, for moveable articulation with the head of the ribs; a spinal column thus constructed combines in the highest degree perfect flexibility with great strength.

In addition to the specimens above referred to, fossil vertebræ of a small serpent have been found in the Red Crag at Kyson in Suffolk;† a locality that has yielded other organic remains of great

* Geol. Trans. Vol. VI. p. 209.

† Brit. Rep. 1841, p. 181.