ion that those sandstones are older than the Carboniferous Age, or even older than the Trias. Besides these, the most ancient traces of reptilian remains occur in the coal-measures, which were deposited during the decline of the empire of fishes in the latter part of the Carboniferous Age.

The geological history of reptiles possesses many points of extreme interest; and, in order to make them clear to the reader, and to give precision to the brief account which I am about to furnish, I shall endeavor to recall in few words the classification of this group of vertebrates.

Reptiles proper, in point of rank, are next above the Batrachians, which come next above the Fishes. Reptiles are purely aerial in their respiration; Fishes purely aquatic; while the Batrachians breathe water in infancy, and air at maturity, exhibiting thus a compromise between the ichthyic and reptilian modes of respiration. The body of the reptile is always covered with scales or bony plates, while that of all modern batrachians is smooth or "naked." The vertebræ of most reptiles are concave at one extremity—generally the anterior—and convex at the other; the vertebræ of batrachians are concave at both extremities, like those of fishes. There are other distinctions to which I need not refer. The frog is the type of the highest order of existing batrachians, the salamander of the second, and the "fish-lizard" of the lowest. The first is possessed of a tail only in the young or tadpole state; the second retains its tail during life; and the third retains both its tail and aquatic—or embryonic—mode of respiration.

Of reptiles, three orders which have played a most conspicuous and important *rôle* in the history of the world are entirely extinct, and three others still survive. The turtles, saurians, and serpents, in descending order, embrace existing reptiles. The first are inclosed in a carapace or "shell;" the second have elongated forms, generally clothed