

of any animals we discover in deposits preceding or succeeding the secondary series.\*

The species of fossil Saurians are so numerous, that we can only select a few of the most remarkable among them, for the purpose of exemplifying the prevailing conditions of animal life, at the periods when the dominant class of animated beings were reptiles; attaining, in many cases, a magnitude unknown among the living orders of that class, and which seems to have been peculiar to those *middle ages* of geological chronology, that were intermediate between the transition and tertiary formations.

During these *ages of reptiles*, neither the carnivorous nor lacustrine Mammalia of the tertiary periods had begun to appear; but the most formidable occupants, both of land and water, were Crocodiles, and Lizards; of various forms, and often of gigantic stature, fitted to endure the turbulence, and continual convulsions of the unquiet surface of our infant world.

When we see that so large and important a range has been assigned to reptiles among the

\* The oldest strata in which any reptiles have yet been found are those connected with the magnesian-limestone formation. (Pl. 1, Sec. 16). The existence of reptiles allied to the Monitor in the cupriferous slate and zechstein of Germany, has long been known. In 1834, two species of reptiles, allied to the Iguana and Monitor, were discovered in the dolomitic conglomerate, on Durdham Down, near Bristol.