

Habitations of reptiles. — Of the great saurians, the gavials which inhabit the Ganges differ from the cayman of America, or the crocodile of the Nile. The monitor of New Holland is specifically distinct from the Indian species; these latter, again, from the African, and all from their congeners in the new world. So in regard to snakes; we find the boa of America represented by the python, a different though nearly allied genus in India. America is the country of the rattlesnake; Africa, of the cerastés; and Asia, of the hooded snake, or cobra di capello. The amphibious genera *Siren* and *Menopoma* belong to North America, possessing both lungs and gills, and respiring at pleasure either air or water. The only analogous animal of the old world is the *Proteus anguinus* of the lakes of Lower Carniola, and the grotto of Adelsberg between Trieste and Vienna.*

There is a legend that St. Patrick expelled all reptiles from Ireland; and certain it is that none of the three species of snakes common in England, nor the toad, have been observed there by naturalists. They have our common frog, and our water-newt, and according to Ray (Quad. 264.), the green lizard (*Lacerta viridis*).

Migrations of the larger reptiles. — The range of the large reptiles is, in general, quite as limited as that of some orders of the terrestrial mammalia. The great saurians sometimes cross a considerable tract in order to pass from one river to another; but their motions by land are generally slower than those of quadrupeds. By water, however, they may transport themselves to distant situations more easily. The larger alligator of the Ganges sometimes descends beyond the brackish water of the delta into the sea; and in such cases it might chance to be drifted away by a current, and survive till it reached a shore at some distance; but such casualties are probably very rare.

Turtles migrate in large droves from one part of the ocean to another during the ovipositing season; and they find their way annually to the island of Ascension, from which the nearest land is about 800 miles distant. Dr. Fleming mentions, that an individual of the hawk's bill turtle (*Chelonia imbricata*), so common in the American seas, has been taken at Papa Stour, one of the West Zetland Islands†; and, according to Sibbald, "the same animal came into Orkney." Another was taken, in 1774, in the Severn, according to Turton. Two instances, also, of the occurrence of the leathern tortoise (*C. coriacea*), on the coast of Cornwall, in 1756, are mentioned by Borlase. These animals of more southern seas can be considered only as stragglers attracted to our shores during uncommonly warm seasons by an abundant supply of food, or carried by the Gulf stream, or driven by storms to high latitudes.

Some of the smaller reptiles lay their eggs on aquatic plants; and these must often be borne rapidly by rivers, and conveyed to distant regions in a manner similar to the dispersion of seeds before adverted to. But that the larger ophidians may be themselves transported

* Richardson, Brit. Assoc. Rep., vol. v. p. 202.

† Brit. Animals, p. 149., who cites Sibbald.