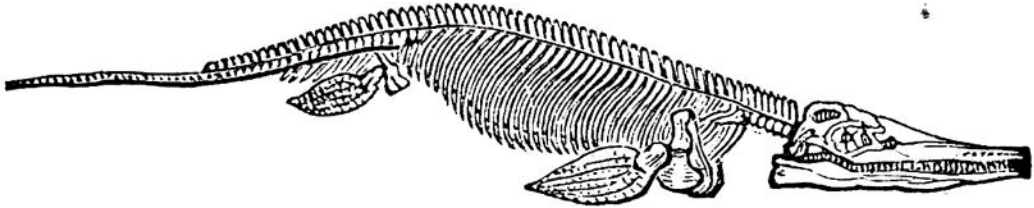


which it used to force its way through the water, and to direct its course. This animal attained a length of from twen-

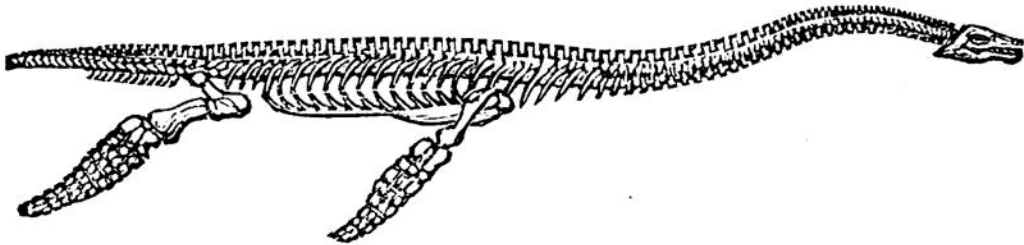


The skeleton of the Ichthyosaurus.

ty to thirty feet. It has the head and sternum of a lizard, the muzzle of a dolphin, and the teeth of a crocodile; its eyes are immense, and its teeth conical and pointed.

#### THE PLESIOSAURUS.

The plesiosaurus resembled the ichthyosaurus in some particulars, and had four paddles of a similar structure, but differed from all other animals in the extreme length of the neck, and the number of vertebræ of which it was composed. The neck of birds consists of more vertebræ than any other organized creatures, and contains from nine to twenty-three; and reptiles have from three to eight; but one species of the



The skeleton of the Plesiosaurus.

plesiosaurus has thirty. This singular animal is supposed to have swum on or near the surface of the water, carrying its head like a swan, and darting upon the fish on which it lived. For our knowledge of this interesting animal, we are entirely indebted to that very able geologist, Mr. Conybeare. When examining some vertebræ of the crocodile and ichthyosaurus, found in the neighbourhood of Bristol, he detected some remains among them which appeared to differ from those of both genera. This supposition was strengthened by finding, in the collection of Colonel Birch, a considerable portion of the skeleton of the animal, and he immediately