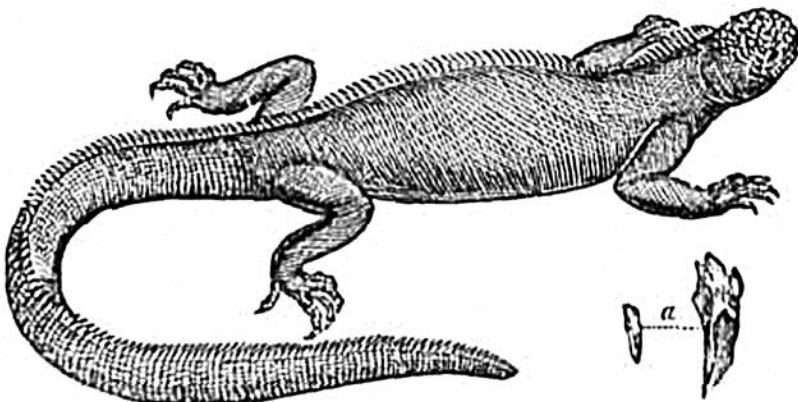


as the turtle, frequenting the ocean, so there may have been formerly some saurians proper to salt, others to fresh water. The common crocodile of the Ganges is well known to frequent equally that river and the brackish and salt water near its mouth; and crocodiles are said in like manner to be abundant both in the rivers of the Isla de Pinos (or Isle of Pines), south of Cuba, and in the open sea round the coast. More recently a saurian has been discovered of aquatic habits and exclusively marine. This creature was found in the Galapagos Islands, during the visit of H. M. S. Beagle to that archipelago, in 1835, and its habits were then observed by Mr. Darwin. The islands alluded to are situated under the equator, nearly 600 miles to the westward of the coast of South America. They are volcanic, some of them being 3000 or 4000 feet high; and one of them, Albemarle Island, 75 miles long. The climate is mild; very little rain falls; and, in the whole archipelago, there is only one rill of fresh water that reaches the coast. The soil is for the most part dry and harsh, and the vegetation scanty. The birds, reptiles, plants, and insects are, with very few exceptions, of species found nowhere else in the world, although all partake, in their general form, of a South American type. Of the mammalia, says Mr. Darwin, one species alone appears to be indigenous, namely, a large and peculiar kind of mouse; but the number of lizards, tortoises, and snakes is so great, that it may be called a land of reptiles. The variety, indeed, of species is small; but the individuals of each are in wonderful abundance. There is a turtle, a large tortoise (*Testudo Indicus*), four lizards, and about the same number of snakes, but no frogs or toads. Two of the lizards belong to the family *Iguanidæ* of Bell, and to a peculiar genus (*Amblyrhynchus*) established by that naturalist, and so named from their obtusely truncated head and short snout.* Of these lizards one is terrestrial in its habits, and burrows in the ground, swarming everywhere on the land, having a round tail, and a mouth somewhat resembling in form that of the tortoise. The other is aquatic, and has its tail flattened laterally for swimming (see fig. 418.) "This marine saurian,"

Fig. 418.



Amblyrhynchus cristatus, Bell. Length varying from 3 to 4 feet. The only existing marine lizard now known.

α. Tooth, natural size and magnified.

* Ἀμβλῦς, *ambly*, blunt; and ῥυγχος, *rhynchus*, snout.