

There are grounds enough, therefore, for the conclusion that the class of Reptiles culminated in the latter half of the Reptilian age. The reality of the *Reptilian* feature of the era comes out strongly on comparing the great Reptiles in the Wealden as to size and numbers with those of the present time.

Now, in India, or the continent of Asia, there are but two species of Reptiles over 15 feet long; in Africa, but one; in all America, but three; and not more than six in the whole world; and the length of the largest does not exceed 25 feet. During the Wealden there lived in England alone 16 large Dinosaurs and 12 Crocodiles, besides a Plesiosaur and three Pterosaurs. The *Reign of Reptiles* becomes more strongly pronounced when the little Marsupial Mammals of the era are brought into view by way of contrast.

*Birds.* — Since Birds are so poorly represented among fossils, little can be said as to progress in the Cretaceous period beyond the fact that part of the Cretaceous Birds, as known first from Marsh's discoveries, retained the teeth of the Jurassic Birds; and some, even the low character of biconcave vertebræ. They had lost the Reptile-like bones and fingers of the fore limb, and the long tail existing in the Jurassic species, and had, in general, the style of vertebræ characterizing modern Birds, besides modern features in most other respects.

It is also a fact of interest that already degenerate forms were in existence under the Bird-type; for such is the *Hesperornis*, as shown in its obsolescent wing-bones and wings, a feature that reduced it to the merosthenic condition of an Ostrich and a Dinosaur. Thus, between the Middle Jurassic and Middle Cretaceous the Bird-type reached essential perfection, though not advanced to its highest stage; and also it passed along at least one line downward to Ostrich-like imperfection. The presence of teeth is not a structural imperfection. Their absence looks much more so; but it is not inconsistent with a high and advancing grade of structure in all other respects.

*Progress in Mammals.* — The Monotremes and Marsupials from the Cretaceous formation show little progress in Mammals beyond the condition in the Jurassic period — nothing, up to the present time, that bears the decided character of a placental Mammal. As the known fossils are mainly teeth and jaws, full comparisons are not yet possible, and certainty of conclusion as to the question, Marsupial or not, is not yet, in all cases, possible.

*Contrast of the European and North American marine faunas.* — The contrast between the marine species of Europe and North America, which characterizes the Early and Middle Mesozoic (page 792), continues, but in diminished degree, into the Cretaceous period. The following table gives the number of species that have been described from the Cretaceous beds of Great Britain and North America, under the tribes mentioned in the first column; the former from Etheridge, as enumerated by him in 1885; the latter, by Whitfield, in 1894.