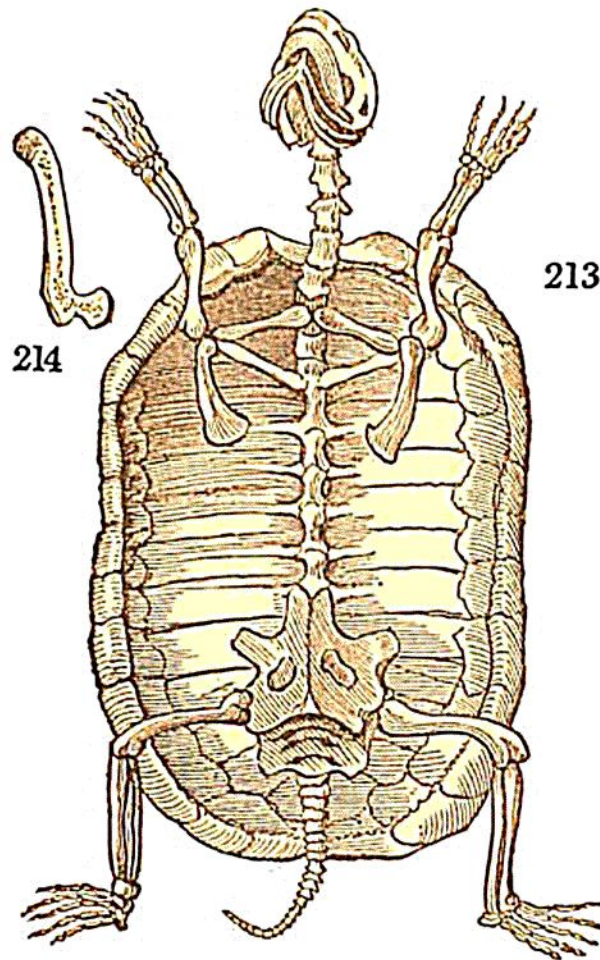


of the spinous processes of the vertebræ and ribs on the one side, and of the usual pieces which compose the sternum on the other. The upper and lower plates thus formed are united at their edges by expansions of the sternocostal appendices, which become ossified. Thus, no new element has been created; but advantage has been taken of those already existing in the general type of the vertebrata, to mo-



dify their forms, by giving them different degrees of relative development, and converting them, by these transformations, into a mechanism of a very different kind, and subservient to other objects than those to which they are usually applied. It is scarcely possible to have stronger proofs, if such were wanting, of the unity of plan which has regulated the formation of all animal structures, than those afforded by the skeleton of the tortoise.

The first step taken to secure the relative immobility of the trunk, is to unite in one rigid bony column all its verte-