

PLATE 11. V. I. p. 175.

1. Side View of the head of an Ichthyosaurus, marking by corresponding letters, the analogies to Cuvier's figures of the same bones in the head of the Crocodile. (Conybeare.)
2. Posterior part of a lower jaw of Ichthyosaurus communis, in the Oxford Museum. (Conybeare.)
- 3—7. Sections presented by the component bones of Fig. 2 in fractured parts above each section. (Conybeare.)
8. View of the lower Jaw of Ichthyosaurus seen from

codiles; but as the horny scales of Fishes, and dermal bones of Crocodilian animals are preserved in the same Lias with the bones of Ichthyosauri, we may infer that if the latter animals had been furnished with any similar appendages, these would also have been preserved, and long ere this discovered, among the numerous remains that have been so assiduously collected from the Lias. They would certainly have been found in the case of the individual now before us, in which even the Epidermis and vessels of the Rete Mucosum have escaped destruction.

Similar black patches of petrified skin are not unfrequently found attached to the skeletons of Ichthyosauri from Lyme Regis, but no remains of any other soft parts of the body have yet been noticed.

The preservation of the skin shews that a short interval only elapsed between the death of the animal, and its interment in the muddy sediment of which the Lias is composed.

Among living reptiles, the Batrachians afford an example of an order in which the skin is naked, having neither scales nor dermal bones.

In the case of Lizards and Crocodiles, the scaly, or bony coverings protect the skin from injury by friction against the hard substances with which they are liable to come into contact upon the land; but to the Ichthyosauri which lived exclusively in the sea, there would seem to have been no more need of the protection of scales or dermal bones, than to the naked skin of Cetacea.

In the case of Plesiosauri also, the non-discovery of the remains of any dermal appendages with the perfect skeletons of animals of that genus, leads to a similar inference, that they too had a naked skin. The same negative argument applies to the flying Reptile Family of Pterodactyles.