

CHAPTER XVII.

FOSSIL REPTILES; COMPRISING THE ENALIOSAURIANS AND
CROCODILES.

“ Nous remontons donc à un autre âge du monde ; à cet âge où la terre n'étoit encore parcourue que par des reptiles à sang froid—où la mer abondoit en ammonites, en bélemnites, en térébratules, en encrinites, et où tous ces genres, aujourd'hui d'une rareté prodigieuse, faisoient le fond de sa population.”—CUVIER, *Oss. Foss.* Tom. V. p. 10.

WE have now to investigate the fossil remains of the highest organized classes of the animal kingdom, which possess an osseous skeleton, with a flexible spinal column, composed of articulated bones, and present in the various classes, orders, genera, and species, innumerable modifications of form and structure. The mineralized relics of these organisms consist, for the most part, of insulated or displaced groups of bones, teeth, &c., and durable portions of the dermal integuments ; entire skeletons being of extremely rare occurrence. A profound knowledge of anatomy and physiology, and access to anatomical and zoological collections, are therefore indispensable for the successful cultivation of this department of Palæontology. Fortunately for the