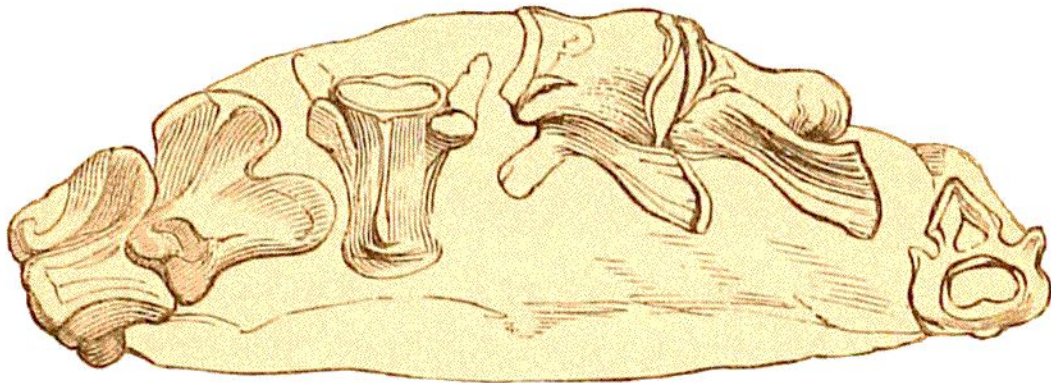


VII. OPHIDIANS, OR SERPENTS.—The remains of the vertebral columns of extinct Serpents, were discovered, many years since, in the London clay of the Isle of Sheppey, and specimens were obtained by the celebrated HUNTER, and preserved in his museum. These specimens, together with others in the collections of Mr. Saull, and Mr. Bowerbank, have been described by Professor Owen,* who infers,



LIGN. 148. FOSSIL VERTEBRÆ OF A SERPENT ($\frac{2}{3}$ nat.) Isle of Sheppey.

(In the Museum of J. S. Bowerbank, Esq.)

PALÆOPHIS toliapicus; Prof. Owen.

from the configuration of these vertebræ, and from their far exceeding in size those of any known poisonous serpents, that they belong to species allied to the Boæ and Pythons. “Serpents of such dimensions exist in the present day only in warm or tropical regions; and their food is by no means restricted to animals of the cold-blooded classes. The remains of birds and mammalia are those most

* Geol. Trans. Vol. VI. p. 209.