

bend gracefully in their descent, may in some degree serve to show. I have seen a richly inlaid coat of mail, which was once worn by the puissant Charles the Fifth ; but its elaborate carvings, though they belonged to the age of Benvenuto Cellini, were rude and unfinished, compared with those which fretted the armor of the *Asterolepis*.

The creature's cranial buckler, which was of great size and strength, might well be mistaken for the carapace of some Chelonian fish of no inconsiderable bulk. The cranial bucklers of the larger Dipterians were ample enough to have covered the corresponding part in the skulls of our middle-sized market-fish, such as the haddock and whiting ; the buckler of a *Coccosteus* of the extreme size would have covered, if a little altered in shape, the upper surface of the skull of a cod ; but the cranial buckler of *Asterolepis*, from which the accompanying wood-cut was taken, (fig. 27,) would have considerably more than covered the corresponding part in the skull of a large horse ; and I have at least one specimen in my collection which would have fully covered the front skull of an elephant. In the smaller specimens, the buckler somewhat resembles a laborer's shovel divested of its handle, and sorely rust-eaten along its lower or cutting edge. It consisted of plates, connected at the edges by flat squamous sutures, or, as a joiner might perhaps say, *glued* together in *bevelled* joints. And in consequence of this arrangement, the same plates which seem broad on the exterior surface appear comparatively narrow on the interior one, and *vice versa* ; the occipital plate, (*a*,) which, running from the nape along the centre of the buckler, occupies so considerable a space on its outer surface, exhibits inside a superficies reduced at least one half. Like nine tenths of its contemporaries, the *Asterolepis* exhibits the little central plate between the eyes ; but the