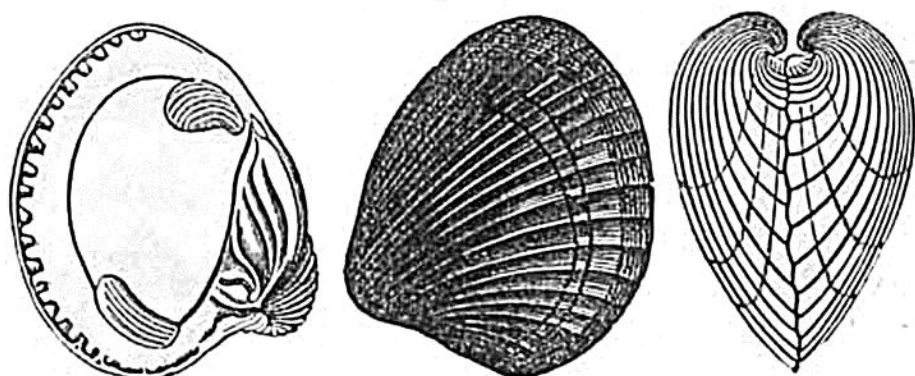


devoid of fossils, they contain marine shells in some places, among which *Venericardia planicosta* (see fig. 206) is abundant, with *Turritella sulcifera* and *Nummulites lævigata*. (See fig. 210, p. 215.)

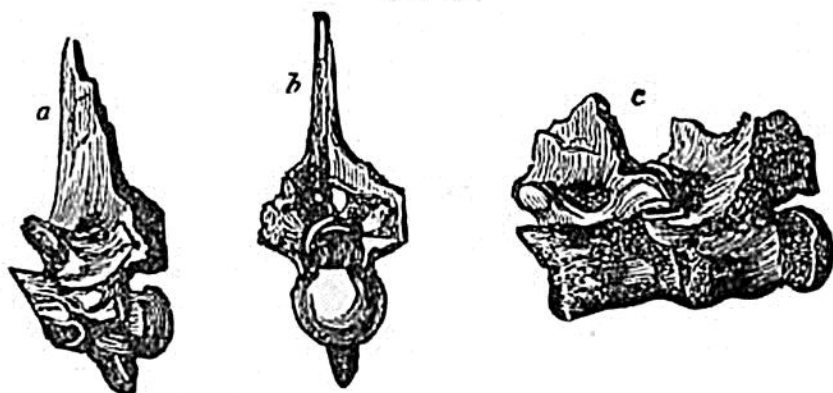
Fig. 206.



Venericardia planicosta, Lam.
Cardita planicosta, Deshayes.

At Bracklesham Bay, near Chichester, in Sussex, the characteristic shells of this member of the Eocene series are best seen; among others, the huge *Cerithium giganteum*, so conspicuous in the calcaire grossier of Paris, where it is sometimes 2 feet in length. The volutes and cowries of this formation, as well as the lunulites and corals, seem to favor the idea of a warm climate having prevailed, which is borne out by the discovery of a serpent, *Palæophis typhæus* (see fig. 207), exceeding, according to

Fig. 207.



Palæophis typhæus, Owen; an Eocene sea-serpent. Bracklesham.

a, b. Vertebra, with long neural spine preserved.

c. Two vertebrae in natural articulation.

Prof. Owen, 20 feet in length, and allied in its osteology to the Boa, Python, Coluber, and Hydrus. The compressed form and diminutive size of certain caudal vertebrae indicate so much analogy with Hydrus as to induce the Hunterian professor to pronounce this extinct ophidian to have been marine.* He had previously combated with much success the evidence advanced to prove the existence in the Northern Ocean of huge sea-serpents in our own times, but he now contends for the former existence in the British Eocene seas, of less gigantic serpents, when the climate was

* Palæont. Soc. Monograph. Rept. pt. ii. p. 61