

TERTIARY PERIOD.

A NEW organic creation makes its appearance in the Tertiary period ; nearly all the animal life is changed, and what is most remarkable in this new development is the appearance, in larger numbers, of the great class of Mammifera.

During the Primary period, Crustaceans and Fishes predominated in the animal kingdom ; in the Secondary period the earth was assigned to Reptiles ; but during the Tertiary period the Mammals were kings of the earth ; nor do these animals appear in small number, or at distant intervals of time ; great numbers of these beings appear to have lived on the earth, and at the same moment ; many of them being, so to say, unknown and undescribed.

If we except the Marsupials, the first created Mammals would appear to have been the Pachyderms, to which the Elephant belongs. This order of animals long held the first rank ; it was almost the only representative of the Mammal during the first of the three periods which constitute the Tertiary epoch. In the second and third periods Mammals appear of species which have now become extinct, and which were alike curious from their enormous proportions, and from the singularity of their structure. Of the species which appeared during the latter part of the epoch, the greater number still exist. Among the new Reptiles, some Salamanders, as large as Crocodiles, and not very distinct from existing forms, are added to the animal creation during the three periods of the Tertiary epoch. Chelonians were abundant within the British area during the older epoch. During the same epoch Birds are present, but in much fewer numbers than the Mammalia ; here songsters, there birds of prey, in other cases domestic—or, rather, some appear to wait the yoke and domestication from man, the future supreme lord of the earth.

The seas were inhabited by a considerable number of beings of all classes, and nearly as varied as those now living ; but we no longer find in the Tertiary seas those Ammonites, Belemnites, and