modelled after the type of those of Coluber. The poison apparatus is much less developed than among other veno­mous kinds ; but the fangs, though short, are strong. The species inhabit the warmer countries of both the New and Old World, but do not occur in Europe. They form three generic groups, as after mentioned.

Genus Elaps. Body slender and cylindrical, of nearly equal size throughout, and usually encompassed by fifteen rows of broad, smooth scales. Head elongated, and not strongly distinguishable from the trunk.

This genus was established by Schneider,@@\* and now con­tains all those slender-bodied venomous kinds, which by their elongated forms remind us of *Tortrix and Calamaria.* They attain to no great size, seldom reaching three or four feet in length, and scarcely exceeding a finger’s thickness in diameter. Their colours are often bright and beautiful, a combination of red and black being frequent among them. They prefer countries covered by an abundant vegetation, concealing themselves amid the herbs of the meadows, or the loftier luxuriance of the forest ; and with this circum­stance we may connect the fact, that only a single species is found in Africa, all the others occurring in tropical Ame­rica, New Holland, the Indian Archipelago, and Bengal,— the latter country however producing likewise only a soli­tary instance in *Elaps trimaculatus.* Their agility is by no means great, and they prey chiefly on other reptiles,—birds being probably too active, quadrupeds too large, and fish too aquatic, for creatures of slowish movement, small size, and terrestrial habits. We cannot here detail the species, of which eleven are described by M. Schlegel, but must rest satisfied by referring, as examples, to a few figures, such as,—*E. corallinus (Nova Acta,* x. pl. 4), *E. Surinamensis (Seba,* ii. pl. 86, fig. 2), *E. collaris ( Erpétol. de Java,* pl. 45), *E. trimaculatus (* Russel, *Ind. Serf.* i. pl. 8).

Genus Bungarus. Form more robust than that of Elaps. Head broad, depressed, rounded terminally, and towards the sides. Abdomen convex. Tail robust. Dorsal line furnished with a row of hexagonal scales, larger than the rest. Sub-caudal plates simple.

To this genus belong the *Bungarum pamma* of Russel *( Ind. Serp.* i. pl. 3), *B. annularis,* Daudin, and the *Geei Paragoodoo* of the former author, *Β. sernifasciatus* of Khul and Schlegel. Both species inhabit India, as well as Java and Ceylon. The natives of India, who are said generally to exaggerate the noxious character of their serpents, assert that the bite of the latter produces immediate death, although Dr Russel’s experiments go to prove that it is seldom fatal to chickens in less than half an hour, or to dogs in a shorter period than an hour and a half. A *Geedi Paragoodoo* was made to bite a large dog on the thigh, near the groin, where it held fast for more than twenty seconds, but the fangs scarcely penetrated farther than the skin. The dog howl­ed much when first wounded, but on being set at liberty walked about for a time without manifesting any peculiar symptoms. In ten minutes, however, he drew up the wounded leg, continuing to stand on the other three ; in a quarter of an hour he crouched, and howled again, and the thigh became paralytic, though the poor creature was still able to raise himself; in twenty-five minutes both thighs were paralytic; and in the course of the second hour he became greatly disordered, grew apparently torpid, lay pant­ing on one side, and died in about two hours, without con­vulsions. Another dog of smaller size expired in one hour and ten minutes, after being strongly convulsed for some minutes prior to its death.

Genus Naja. General form robust. Body not cylin­drical, but thickening in the middle, and tapering towards either end. Tail lengthened and conical. Abdomen broad and convex. Head well distinguished from the trunk. Eyes

large and lateral. Neck more or less capable of infla­tion.

This genus contains the famous 'hooded or spectacle- snakes, called *cobras de capello* by the Portuguese, the ma­jority having the power of raising the anterior ribs, so as to produce a peculiar disk-like inflation of the neck or upper portion of the body. The species are peculiar to the an­cient world,—if New Holland, which produces two, and was unknown to the ancients, may be classed therein. M. Schle­gel describes eleven different kinds, many of which, how­ever, are arranged in separate genera by other writers, but which that author regards as forming an uninterrupted se­ries, closely connected with each other, and of which the foremost exhibit the announced generic characteristics in great strength and precision, while the others gradually de­part from the type, and form a passage to the vipers.

The hooded snake, commonly so called *(coluber naja* of the older writers,—*Naja tripudians* of the recent systema- tists), is one of the most noted as well as noxious of the In­dian reptiles. Its general length is from three to four feet, and the diameter of its body about an inch and a quarter. The inflated portion is marked above by a large conspicu­ous patch, closely resembling the figure of an old-fashioned pair of spectacles. The usual colour of the upper parts is pale ferruginous brown, the under being of a bluish white occasionally tinged with yellow. The terminal portion ta­pers gradually, and ends in a rather slender sharp-pointed extremity. In India this dreaded species is more univer­sally known than any other. It is frequently exhibited as a public show, and being carried about in a covered basket, is made to assume a kind of dancing motion (a modification, we presume, of some natural and instinctive movement) for the amusement of the public. Raising itself up on its lower extremity, and moving its head and body alternately from side to side, the insidious creature seems pleased by keep­ing time with the measured melody of “ flutes and soft re­corders.” We presume that a love of music is natural to certain serpents ; and that this fact was observed of old in Palestine, is probable from the expression of the inspired Psalmist, who compares the ungodly to the deaf adder, which “ stoppeth her ears, and refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer.” Chateaubriand relates that he was an eye­witness, on the banks of the Genesee, to the fact of a native appeasing the wrath of a rattle-snake (which he even caused to follow him), merely by the music of his flute. The dan­cing snakes of India are usually, though not universally, de­prived of their poison-fangs. “ When the music ceases,” says Mr Forbes, “the snakes appear motionless; but if not imme­diately covered up in the basket, the spectators are liable to fatal accidents. Among my drawings is that of a *cobra de ca­pella,* which danced for an hour on the table while I painted it ; during which I frequently handled it to observe the beau­ty of the spots, and especially the spectacles on the hood, not doubting but that its venomous fangs had been previously ex­tracted. But the next morning my upper servant, who was a zealous Mussulman, came to me in great haste, and de­sired I would instantly retire and praise the Almighty for my good fortune. Not understanding his meaning, I told him that I had already performed my devotions, and had not so many stated prayers as the followers of his prophet. Mo­hammed then informed me, that while purchasing some fruit in the bazaar, he observed the man who had been with me the preceding evening, entertaining the country people with his dancing snakes ; they, according to their usual custom, sat on the ground around him ; when, either from the music stopping too suddenly, or from some other cause irritating the vicious reptile which I had often handled, it darted at the throat of a young woman, and inflicted a wound of which she died in half an hour.”@@’ A similar fate had

@@@I *Hist. Aιιιphib.* ii. p. 289.

*@@@tt Oriental Memoirs.* i. p. *44.*