

## ALLIGATOR AND TURTLES AS PETS.

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In November of last year a small alligator (*Alligator Mississippiensis*) and three turtles were placed together in an aquarium. Only a few features descriptive of the alligator need to be mentioned. The skin is now used for so many purposes that by this means it has become known.

This reptile is carnivorous, head broad, flattened and having teeth of the lower jaw fitting into pits in the upper. The bright yellow bands so marked in the young, lose their color to a large extent in the adult. Tail about half the entire length of animal, and laterally compressed, terminating in a blunt point.

Approaching cold weather had a marked effect in his loss of appetite and vigor. During daytime the aquarium was placed in sunlight, at night on hot water coils in the room, with a glass cover, to retain heat and prevent escape. Remarking to a friend his loss of appetite, the suggestion was jokingly made: "Why not try cod liver oil?" The alligator's mouth was forced open and a few drops poured in. No bad results following, this novel article of diet, varied at times with fluid beef, was continued twice per week through the winter. It is questionable whether any benefit resulted from this treatment.

Early in May, he for the first time, snapped at a piece of meat which was being fed to the turtles. From this time onward all kinds of meat, small toads, young tadpoles, newly hatched catfish, etc., were fed him. Fish cut into small pieces was greatly relished, but earthworms were preferred above all else. On receiving food it was carried into the water and was there eaten, considerable motion being made in swallowing, the throat appearing too small to admit of its passage. While feeding, his usual torpid appearance underwent a change. The pupils of his eyes, at other times contracted to a narrow slit, now become greatly dilated; and with open mouth and tail gracefully curved upward his appearance was rather formidable. A hissing noise when disturbed, and a sort of grunt in a high key, were the only sounds he appeared capable of making.