

table, models of all the bones which are now preserved in the museum of Philadelphia, for which I am indebted to an eminent physician and geologist of that city, Dr. S. G. Morton, the author of the most valuable treatise that has appeared on the fossils of the United States.* The late American President, Jefferson, who first described these remains, inferred, from the form and magnitude of the claw-bone, that the original was a carnivorous animal of colossal proportions. But Cuvier, by his profound knowledge of the principles of anatomy, determined, from certain characters of the articulating surfaces,† that the animal was related to the *bradypus*, or sloth. I will endeavour briefly to explain to you the mode by which this induction was obtained. The paws or feet, both of the canine and feline tribes, are armed with claws; in the former, the nails are thick and coarse as in the dog, wolf, &c. and fitted to bear the friction and pressure incident to a long chase; while in the cat tribe, on the contrary, they are curved and sharp, which qualities are preserved by a peculiar mechanism. The last bone which supports the claw is placed laterally to the penultimate bone, and is so joined to it that an elastic ligament draws it back, and raises the sharp extremity of the claw upwards;

* Synopsis of the Fossils of the Cretaceous Group of the United States, by S. G. Morton, M.D. &c.

† That surface of the bone which forms a joint with another bone.