

Among the lesser quadrupeds which burrow in the ground, we find many whose eyes are extremely minute, so much so, indeed, as to be scarcely serviceable as visual organs. The eye of the *Sorex*, or shrew mouse, is very small, and surrounded by thick hair, which completely obstructs vision, and requires to be removed by the action of the subcutaneous muscles, in order to enable the animal to derive any advantage from its eyes. These organs in the *Mole* are still more remarkably deficient in their development, not being larger than the head of a pin, and consequently not easily discovered.* It is therefore probable that this animal trusts chiefly to its sense of hearing, which is remarkably acute, for intimations of the approach of danger, especially as, in its subterranean retreats, the vibrations of the solid earth are readily transmitted to its ears. The *Mus typhlus*, or blind rat of Linnæus; (the *Zemni* of Pallas,) which is an inhabitant of the western parts of Asia, cannot be supposed to possess even the small degree of vision of the mole; for no external organ of this sense has been detected in any part of that animal. The whole side of the head is covered with a continuous integument of uniform thickness, and equally overspread with a thick velvety hair. It is only after removing the skin that a black spot is discovered on each side, of exceedingly small size, and apparently the mere imperfect rudiment of an eye, and, as far as we can perceive, incapable of exercising any of the functions of vision.

Those mammalia, whose habits are aquatic, having the eye frequently immersed in a dense medium, require a special provision for accommodating the refractive power of that organ to this variation of circumstances. Accordingly, it is found that in the *Seal*, and other amphibious tribes, the structure of the eye approaches to that of fishes, the lens be-

* Magendie asserts that the mole has no optic nerve; but G. St. Hilare and Carus recognise the existence of a very slender nervous filament, arising from the brain, and distributed to the eye of that animal.