

Davy, in his last singular work, thus expresses himself concerning the *Proteus* :—" My reveries became discursive, I was carried, in imagination, back to the primitive state of the globe, when the great animals of the Sauri kind were created under the pressure of a heavy atmosphere ; and my notion on this subject was not destroyed, when I heard from a celebrated anatomist, to whom I sent the specimens I had collected, that the organization of the spine of the *Proteus* was analogous to that of one of the Sauri, the remains of which are found in the older secondary strata." Sir Humphry probably here alludes to a celebrated fossil found in the slate quarries of Eningen, which Scheuchzer called an antediluvian man, but which Cuvier regards as a giant species of *Proteus*.

All the circumstances above stated being duly weighed, and especially the discovery of a species in the depths of the earth, related to one of the fossil ones, I trust that my hypothesis of a subterranean metropolis for the Saurian, and perhaps other reptiles, will not be deemed so improbable and startling as it may at the first blush appear ; at the same time, I would by no means be thought to contend that *none* of these animals are extinct, but solely that *all* may not be so, and that their never having been found in a recent state may have arisen from the peculiar circumstances of their situation.

I have been led into this discussion by Dr. Mantell's Hypothesis of an *Age of Reptiles*,* in which he supposes that the Saurians were the mighty masters, as well as monsters, of the primeval animal kingdom, and the lords of the creation before the existence of the human race. Since this hypothesis, as stated in the above extract, cannot be reconciled with the account of the creation of animals as given

* Originally published in Jameson's Edinburgh Journal, 1831.