

the light, it is evident that it produces some effect upon them; behind the head, on each side, is an opening like those of fishes, over which are the gills, divided into several branches.* It has, besides, an internal pneumatic apparatus, consisting of two vesicles, below the heart. The tail is compressed, furnished above and below with a caudal fin, extending to the posterior legs. Its legs, from their having no claws, are, it is probable, principally useful in walking upon the mud; and, by means of its caudal fin, it can move like an eel or fish in the water. From a small shell-fish being found in the stomach of one, it seems to follow that its food, at least in part, consists of Molluscans inhabiting the same subterranean caves and waters with itself, and probably distinct from any of those to which the atmosphere has free access. Sometimes, elevating its head above the water, it makes a hissing noise louder than could be expected from so small an animal.

Before quitting this subject, I may observe that Baron Humboldt has given an account of a wonderful eruption of *subterranean fishes*, which sometimes takes place from the volcanos of the kingdom of Quito. These fishes are ejected in the intervals of the igneous eruptions, in such quantities as to occasion putrid fevers by the miasmata they produce: they sometimes issued from the crater of the volcano, and sometimes from lateral clefts, but constantly at the elevation of between two and three thousand toises above the level of the sea. In a few hours, millions are seen to descend from Cotopaxi, with great masses of cold and fresh water. As they do not appear to be disfigured or mutilated, they cannot be exposed to the action of great heat. Humboldt thought they were identical with fishes that were

* Fig. 107, *a*.