

became founder of the Silurian System. Prior to these joint labours he had the satisfaction—much to the amusement of his friends—of finding at Oeningen, between Constance and Schaffhausen, remains of an animal, regarded at the time as a fossil fox. This he described in a paper read before the Society in January 1830.<sup>1</sup>

Like many another fossil it has had its vicissitudes. Cuvier on seeing a drawing thought that the specimen was in all probability that of a fox, and Mantell referred it provisionally to *Vulpes communis*. In 1843, H. von Meyer wrote of it as *Canis Vulpes (communis) fossilis*, and suggested the name *Canis palustris*, 'the dog of the marsh.' Owen in 1847 thought that it was more nearly related to the civet-cat, but intermediate between *Canis* and *Viverra*; and he named it *Galecynus œningensis*. Huxley, who had no compunction in differing from Owen, saw more of the dog than the cat in the fossil; and on his authority Mr. R. Lydekker restored it to *Canis palustris*. It is now the opinion of Dr. C. W. Andrews that the appropriate name is *Galecynus palustris*, H. v. Meyer, sp. The counterpart of the specimen was presented by Murchison to the Geological Society,<sup>2</sup> the other portion being in the British Museum (Natural History).

Fitton (1780–1861), as remarked by Murchison, was 'truly one of the British worthies who have raised modern geology to its present position.' Born in Dublin in 1780, he graduated B.A. at Trinity College in 1799, and early began to give attention to the rocks and fossils of the neighbourhood. Considering the mistakes that occasionally are made nowadays, it is not surprising that 'in those troublous times' his geological movements created suspicion; on one occasion he was taken to be a rebel, and 'for a short time kept in military durance.' At Edinburgh, where he studied medicine, he came under the influence

<sup>1</sup> See 'Life of Sir Roderick I. Murchison,' by A. Geikie, vol. i. 1875, pp. 125–128, 137, 154, &c.; and Murchison, *Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc.* vol. xviii. p. xxxii.

<sup>2</sup> *Proc. Geol. Soc.* i. 167.