

rium, missurium, and the megatherides, among which is Owen's sloth-like mylodon, eleven feet in length.* Besides these extinct families, we find the fossil remains of still extant animals, as the elephant, rhinoceros, ox, horse, and stag. The field near Bogota, called the *Campo de Gigantes*, which is filled with the bones of mastodons, and in which I caused excavations to be made, lies 8740 feet above the level of the sea, while the osseous remains, found in the elevated plateaux of Mexico, belong to true elephants of extinct species.† The projecting spurs of the Himalaya, the Sewalik Hills, which have been so zealously investigated by Captain Cautley‡ and Dr. Falconer, and the Cordilleras, whose elevations are, probably, of very different epochs, contain, besides numerous mastodons, the sivatherium, and the gigantic land tortoise of the primitive world (*Colossochelys*), which is twelve feet in length and six in height, and several extant families, as elephants, rhinoceroses, and giraffes; and it is a remarkable fact, that these remains are found in a zone which still enjoys the same tropical climate which must be supposed to have prevailed at the period of the mastodons.§

Having thus passed in review both the inorganic formations of the earth's crust and the animal remains which are contained within it, another branch of the history of organic life still remains for our consideration, viz., the epoch of vegetation, and the successive floras that have occurred simultaneously with the increasing extent of the dry land and the modifications of the atmosphere. The oldest transition strata, as we have already observed, contain merely cellular marine plants, and it is only in the devonian system that a few cryptogamic forms of vascular plants (*Calamites* and *Lycopodiaceæ*) have been observed.|| Nothing appears to corroborate

* [See Mantell's *Wonders of Geology*, vol. i., p. 168.]—*Tr.*

† Cuvier, *Ossemens Fossiles*, 1821, t. i., p. 157, 261, and 264. See, also, Humboldt, *Ueber die Hochebene von Bogota*, in the *Deutschen Vierteljahrs-schrift*, 1839, bd. i., s. 117.

‡ [The fossil fauna of the Sewalik range of hills, skirting the southern base of the Himalaya, has proved more abundant in genera and species of mammalia than that of any other region yet explored. As a general expression of the leading features, it may be stated, that it appears to have been composed of representative forms of all ages, from the *oldest of the tertiary period down to the modern*, and of *all the geographical divisions of the Old Continent grouped together into one comprehensive fauna.* *Fauna Antiqua Sivaliensis*, by Hugh Falconer, M.D., and Major P. T. Cautley.]—*Tr.*

§ *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, 1844, No. 15, p. 109.

|| Beyrich, in Karsten's *Archiv für Mineralogie*, 1844, bd. xviii., s. 218