

SECTION IX.

MEGALOSAURUS.*

THE Megalosaurus, as its name implies, was a Lizard, of great size, of which, although no skeleton has yet been found entire, so many perfect bones and teeth have been discovered in the same quarries, that we are nearly as well acquainted with the form and dimensions of its limbs, as if they had been found together in a single block of stone.*

From the size and proportions of these bones, as compared with existing Lizards, Cuvier concludes the Megalosaurus to have been an enormous reptile, measuring from forty to fifty feet in length, and partaking of the structure of the Crocodile and the Monitor.

* This genus was established by the Author, in a Memoir, published in the Geol. Trans. of London, (Vol. I., N. S. Pt. 2, 1824), and was founded upon specimens discovered in the oolitic slate of Stonesfield, near Oxford, the place in which these bones have as yet chiefly occurred. Mr. Mantell has discovered remains of the same animal in the Wealden fresh-water formation of Tilgate Forest; and from this circumstance we infer that it existed during the deposition of the entire series of oolitic strata. The author, in 1826, saw fragments of a jaw, containing teeth, and of some other bones of Megalosaurus, in the museum at Besançon, from the oolite of that neighbourhood.