GeNus Anguis, Cuv. No extremities visible externally. Tympanum concealed beneath the skin. Maxillary teeth compressed and hooked,—no teeth upon the palate. Body surrounded by imbricated scales, without plication on the sides. One of the lungs is a half less than the other.

The English slow-worm, *Anguis fragilis,* is common over a great part of Europe.@@1 It is very smooth, of a shining brownish-gray above, inclining to reddish on the sides, and bluish-black upon the under surface. It rarely measures more than a foot in length. It lives on insects and small mollusca, excavates circuitous holes in the earth, of several feet in extent, and with more than one issue. It is an in­nocent and gentle creature, remarkable for stiffening itself so much when seized as sometimes to break in two. Hence its specific name of *fragilis.*

Genus Acontias, Cuv. No osseous pieces corresponding to the sternum and pelvis, the shoulder-blades and clavicles. Anterior ribs united to each other inferiorly by cartilagi­nous prolongations. Teeth small and conical : “ Je crois,” says Cuvier, “ leur en avoir aperçu quelques-unes au pa­lais.”@@1 Muzzle enclosed in a kind of mask. One lung of medium size, and another of very small dimensions.

To this genus belongs the speckled slow-worm of Shaw, *Anguis Meleagris,* Linn., a native of the Cape of Good Hope·@@3 Its tail is much shorter and more obtuse than that of the British slow-worm. Its upper surface is spotted longitudi­nally with brown. Africa produces other species, one of which, according to Cuvier *(Ac. cæcus),* is entirely blind.

We now reach Baron Cuvier’s second great division, the True Serpents, consisting of all those genera which exhibit no vestige of either shoulder or sternum, but have a great portion of the circumference of the body surrounded by the ribs. The vertebras articulate by means of a con­vex facette at one end, entering into a concave facette of that which follows. (See Plate CCCCXLIV. fig. 2*a* and 2*b*.) The third eye-lid and the tympanum are wanting, but the osselet of the ear exists beneath the skin, and its handle passes behind the tympanic bone. Several still manifest a remnant of the posterior members hid beneath the skin, or even showing themselves externally under the form of small hooks.@@4 The first two genera are scarcely entitled to the designation of *True Serpents ;* and Baron Cuvier has him­self drawn a line between them and those which he names *Serpents properly so called,* although the two terms seem not particularly distinctive. The reptiles in question form the tribe *Double Marcheurs* of Cuvier, and may be named

AMPIIISBÆNIDÆ, OR BLIND-WORMS.

The lower jaw still continues, as among the preceding groups, supported by a tympanic bone, articulated directly to the cranium, the two branches of that jaw being solder­ed together anteriorly, while those of the upper one are fixed to the cranium and the intermaxillary bone. This formation both produces an equality of dimension between the head and the rest of the body, and also prevents that peculiar power of dilatation for which the genuine ser­pents are so remarkable. (See Plate CCCCXLIII. fig. l*a*.) Their general form, according to Cuvier, “ leur permet de marcher également bien dans les deux sens,” a fact, how­ever, which that great observer does not seem to state as from the “ ocular proof,” and for the confirmation of which

we have sought in vain in the work of any well-instructed traveller. The bony frame-work of the orbit is incomplete behind, the eye is extremely small, and the body is covered with scales. The windpipe is elongated, the heart placed far backwards, and the anus situate close to the extremity of the body. None of the known species is venomous. Of the two genera, the one is closely related to *Chalcis* and *Chirotis,* the other to *Anguis* and *Acontias.*

Genus Amphisbæna, Linn. The entire body covered by circular ranges of quadrangular scales. A range of pores anterior to the anus. Teeth of a conical form, numerous on the jaws, none upon the palate ; only a single lung.

The species are South American reptiles, to which an ancient classical name has been, with no great propriety, applied. (See Plate CCCCXLIII. fig. 2.) The white one, *Amph. alba,* Linn., measures from a foot and a half to two feet in length, and is proportionably of a bulky form.@@5 It inhabits Brazil, where its native name of *Ibriaram* signifies Lord of the Earth. It was first described by Marcgrave, who, however, states erroneously that it is venomous, and will wound either with head or tail. It preys on insects, and is often found near ant-hills. Another species, from Martinique *(Amph. cæca,* Cuv.), is stone-blind.

It may be observed in passing, that the genus *Leposternοn* of Spix is composed of Amphisbænæ, of which the anterior part of the body is furnished below with several plates, which interrupt the ranging of the circular rings. They have no pores anterior to the anus, the head is short, and the muzzle slightly projecting. Example, *Lep. mi­crocephalies,* Spix,—*Amph. punctata* of Prince Maximilian (Neuwied).

Genus Typhlops, Schneider. Body covered with small imbricated scales (as in *Anguis,* with which group the spe­cies were for a long time combined). Muzzle advanced, furnished with plates. Tongue long and forked ; eye in the form of a minute point, scarcely visible through the skin ; anus almost terminal ; one lung four times larger than the other.

These, as Cuvier remarks, are small serpent-like crea­tures, which bear a great resemblance to earth-worms. They inhabit the warmer countries both of America and the old world. Some have the head obtuse, and of equal diameter with the body. Such is *T. braminus,* Cuv., the punctulated slow-worm of Shaw, and *rondos talooloopam* of Dr Russel.@@6 It is a diminutive reptile, measuring about six inches in length, with the thickness of a hen’s quill. It is of a cream-colour, powdered over with innumerable black dots. It is common in Vizagapatam, and, according to the author last named, is vulgarly reputed mischievous. It is described as moving with great swiftness ; and a specimen immersed in spirits remained alive for more than ten mi­nutes. Others (and these the majority) have the muzzle depressed and obtuse, and furnished anteriorly with seve­ral plates. Example, *T. reticulatus.@@7* A few have the front of the muzzle covered by a single broad plate. Such is *T. subargeηteus (Anguis lumbricalis,* Linn. and Lacep.), the silvery snake of Brown.@@“ Finally, there are one or more peculiar species, in which the muzzle terminates in a small conical point, and the posterior extremity is enve­loped by a horny buckler of an oval form. We here place *T. Philippinus,* Cuv., which measures about eight inches in length, and is entirely of a black colour. We presume that Dr Shaw’s snouted slow-worm, *Anguis nasuta (A. rostrata* of Weigel@@8), though differing in colour, is nearly allied, and ought to be placed in the same genus.

@@@1 Lacépède. ***Quadrupèdes Ovipares,*** ii. plate 19, 1.

***@@@3 Rèyne Animal,*** ii. 70.

***@@@’ Thesaurus,*** ii. tab. 21, fig. 4. It is not found in the East Indies, as both Seba and Shaw supposed.

@@@\* Naturalists, as we shall afterwards take occasion to notice, differ in their views regarding the exact nature of these outward appendages. They are described by M. Mayer, in the twelfth volume of the ***Academia Natur∣e Curiosorum of*** Bonn.

@@@t Lacép. ii. pi. 21, 1.

***@@@\* Serpente of the Coast of Coromandel,*** p. 48, pl. 43.

@@@7 Scheuchzer. ***Physica Sacra,*** pl. 747, 4.

*@@@8 Civil and Natural History of Jamaica,* p. 460, pi. 44, 6g. 1.

*@@@, Berlin Transactions,* iii. p. 190.