

have asserted ; it does not brave danger, as has been pretended, and probably because it does not perceive it. Whatever gestures are made to frighten this animal, it always advances without turning aside ; however, as no animal is deprived of that sentiment necessary for its preservation, it suddenly compresses its skin when tormented, and spurts forth, upon those who attack it, that corrosive milk which is under the skin. If beaten it begins to raise its tail ; afterwards it becomes motionless, as if stunned by a kind of paralytic stroke ; for we must not, with some naturalists, ascribe to an animal so devoid of instinct, so much art and cunning as to counterfeit death. In short, it is very difficult to kill the salamander ; but when dipped in vinegar, or surrounded with salt reduced to a powder, it expires in convulsions, as is the case with several other lizards and worms.

It seems that we cannot allow a being a chimerical quality, without refusing it at the same time, a real property. The cold salamander has been considered as an animal endued with the miraculous power of resisting, and even of extinguishing fire ; but it has also been debased as much as elevated by this singular property. It has been made the most fatal of animals : the