

largeness of the head, length of the ears, hardness of the skin, nakedness of the tail, the form of the rump, and the dimensions of the neighbouring parts, the voice, the appetite, manner of drinking, &c. Can we then suppose that the horse and the ass came originally from the same stock? are they of the same family, or not? and have they not always been different animals?

This question of which philosophers will find the generality, difficulty, and consequences, and which we treat of in this article, because it here offers itself for the first time, appertains to the production of beings nearest to each other, and renders it necessary that we should consider nature under a new point of view. If from the immense variety of animated beings which people the universe, we chuse an animal, or even the body of man, to serve as a foundation to our knowledge, and to find out, by way of comparison, the other organized beings, we shall find that each possesses an independent existence, and that all vary, by different gradations, almost to infinity; there exists also, at the same time, a primitive and general design, which we may trace very far, and of which the gradations are much slower than those of the form, and other apparent relations, for,
without