

stock as those of the old ; that having been afterwards separated by immense seas or impassable lands, they, in course of time, underwent all the effects of a climate which was new to them, and which must also have had its qualities changed by the very causes which produced its separation ; and that they, in consequence, became not only inferior in size, but different in nature. But these circumstances, if true, ought not to prevent us from considering them now as animals of different species. From whatever causes these changes may have proceeded, whether produced by time, climate, or soil, or whether originating with the creation, they are not the less real. Nature is, indeed, in a perpetual fluctuation. It is sufficient for man to watch her in his own time, to look a little backward and forward, by way of forming a conjecture of what she might have been formerly and what she may hereafter be.

As to the utility to be derived from this comparison of animals, it is evident, that independent of correcting the errors of our nomenclators, our knowledge of the animal creation will be enlarged, rendered less imperfect, and more certain ; that we shall be in less hazard of attributing to American animals, properties which belong to those of the East Indies,