

and in many stuffed skins I examined, I did not observe that the intermediate shades both of size and colour differed from the rest by any evident and constant character ; and it only appears, that in Egypt, where the ichneumons may be said to be domestic, they are larger than those in India, where they are wild.

Nomenclators, who are never willing that a being should be only what it is, have greatly varied on the subject of the ichneumon. Linnaeus first made it of the badger kind, and directly after of the ferret. Hasselquist, following the lessons of his master, also makes it a badger. Klein and Brisson have placed it in the weasel class, others in the otter, and some with the rat.\* I only quote these ideas to shew the want of consistency, and the contradictions, which are to be met with in what are called generic denominations, and which are generally false, arbitrary, vague, and equivocal.

The ichneumon is fond of living by the sides of rivers. During the inundations it quits its habitation, and even seeks for prey near inhabited places. They walk without making any noise, and change their manner as occasion requires. Sometimes they carry their heads erect, foreshorten their bodies, and  
rise

\* Professor Cuvier classes it with the bear,