

whence issues several different branches, so much the more or less numerous as the individuals in each species are barren or prolific.

Under this point of view, the horse, the zebra, and the ass, are all of the same family. If the horse is the source, or principal trunk, the zebra and the ass will be collateral branches. The number of their resemblances being infinitely greater than that of their differences, we may look on them as constituting only one genus, the principal characters of which are clearly announced, and common to all three. They are the only animals which have solid hoofs without any appearance of toes or nails. Though they form three very distinct species they are not absolutely separated, since the male-ass will produce with the mare, and the horse with the she-ass; and it is probable that if we were to tame the zebra, and mollify his savage nature, it would likewise produce with the horse and the ass.

This mule, therefore, which has hitherto been regarded as a vitiated production, as a monster composed of two different natures, and consequently incapable of reproduction, is not so base as might be imagined from the above prejudice, since it is not really unprolific, and its sterility depends on certain external and peculiar circumstances. It is well known that
mules