

ly draw the conclusion, that if they do not describe the smaller, or if they do not discriminate between those which closely resemble each other, as the gazelles and others, they were prevented by carelessness or want of method, rather than by opposition from the climate. We shall also determine, that if eighteen or twenty ages, and the circumnavigation of Africa and the Indies, have added nothing in this species to what the ancients already knew, that there is no likelihood that ages to come will bring much additional information to our posterity.

But perhaps an inverse argument may be used against us, and it will be said, that not only the ancients, as we have just proved, have known as many animals as ourselves, but they have described many which we now have not; that we are too hasty in regarding these animals as fabulous; that we should again search for them, before we decide in exhausting the history of the existing creation; that, indeed, amongst these pretendedly fabulous animals, we shall detect, when we know them better, the originals of our remains of unknown species. Some may even surmise that those different monsters, the essential ornaments of the heroic age amongst nearly all people, are precisely those which it has been necessary to destroy, to admit of the progress and establishment of civilization. Thus Theseus and Bellerophon, who bravely defeated these noxious animals, must have been far more fortunate than the existing race, but have not yet contrived to exterminate any one species, but only to drive them back.

It is easy to reply to this objection, by examining the descriptions of these unknown beings, and searching into their origin.

The most numerous have a source purely mythological, and of that their descriptions bear the undeni-