

Great Spirit, to prevent them from destroying the human race? But we may see that this fable was occasioned by the discovery of the bones, like that of the inhabitants of Siberia and their mammoth, which they pretend lives under ground like moles; and like all those of the ancients about the tombs of the giants, which they placed wherever they found the bones of elephants.

Thus we may believe, that if, as we shall prove hereafter, any of the great species of quadrupeds now embedded in regularly stony layers, are not found similar to the living species that we are acquainted with,—it is not the effect of chance, nor because these species, of which we have only fossil bones, are hidden in deserts, and have escaped all travellers to the present time; we ought, on the contrary, to regard this phenomenon as tending to general causes; and the study of it as one of the most proper to lead us to the origin and nature of these causes.

THE FOSSIL BONES OF QUADRUPEDS ARE DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE.

But if this study is more satisfactory in its results than that of the fossil remains of other animals, it is also beset with infinitely greater difficulties. The fossil shells generally present themselves entire, and with all the characteristics which admit of their being analogously arranged in collections or works of naturalists; fish even present their skeletons more or less entire; we generally trace the original form of their bodies, and frequently their generic and specific characteristics, which are