

doubt regarding the cubit employed) were effectual in setting the arithmeticians to work in all ages of the Church, in order to determine whether all the animals in the world, by sevens and by pairs, with food sufficient to serve them for a twelve-month, could have been accommodated in the given space. It was a sort of stock problem, that required, it was thought, no very high attainments to solve. Eighty years have not yet passed since kind old Samuel Johnson, in writing to little Miss Thrale a nice little letter, recommending her to be a good girl, and to mind her arithmetic, advised her to try the ark problem. "If you can borrow 'Wilkins' Real Character,'" we find him saying to the young lady, "a folio which perhaps the booksellers can let you have, you will have a very curious calculation, *which you are qualified to consider*, to show that Noah's ark was capable of holding all the known animals of the world, with provision for all the time in which the earth was under water." Unluckily, however, though the dimensions of the ark were known, the animals of the world were not; and so the question, in at least one of its terms, had to be very frequently re-stated. Let us take it as we find it presented (drawn, however, from a much older source), in Sir Walter Raleigh's magnificent "History of the World." "If in a ship of such greatness," says this distinguished man, "we seek room for eighty-nine distinct species of beasts, or, lest any should be omitted, for a hundred several kinds, we shall easily find place both for them and for the birds, which in bigness are no way answerable to them, and for meat to sustain them all. For there are three sorts of beasts whose bodies are of a quantity well known; the beef, the sheep, and the wolf; to which the rest may be reduced by saying, according to Aristotle, that one elephant is equal to four beeves, one lion to two wolves, and so of the rest. Of beasts, some feed on vegetables, others on flesh. There are one-and-thirty kinds of the greater sort feeding on vegetables,