

cross-ways of Alexandria were so filled with them, that they proved a great inconvenience; but he must have spoken of it from memory. His testimony cannot be received when he contradicts all the rest, and especially when the bird itself is there to refute him.

In like manner, I shall not trouble myself about the passage where *Ælian* * relates, according to the Egyptian embalmers, that the intestines of the ibis are eighty-six cubits long. The Egyptian priests of all classes have been guilty of so many extravagancies with regard to Natural History, that no great importance can be attributed to what one of their lowest classes might aver.

An objection might still be drawn against my opinion from the long attenuated and black feathers which cover the rump of our bird, and of which some traces also are seen in Bruce's figure of the *Abou-Hannes*. The ancients, it might be said, do not speak of them in their descriptions, and their figures do not exhibit them. But I have more on my side, in respect to this matter, than a written testimony or a figured representation. I have found precisely the same feathers in one of the *Saccara* mummies; I kept them carefully as being at once a singular monument

* *Ælian*, Anim. lib. x, cap. xxix.