

tural or produced by human interference, and nothing indicates that, with regard to them, time has more effect than climate and domestication.

I am aware that some naturalists lay great stress upon the thousands of ages which they call into action by a dash of the pen; but, in such matters, we can only judge of what a long period of time might produce, by multiplying in idea what a less time produces. With this view, I have endeavoured to collect the most ancient documents relating to the forms of animals; and there are none which equal, either in antiquity or abundance, those that Egypt furnishes. It affords us, not only representations of animals, but even their identical bodies embalmed in its catacombs.

I have examined with the greatest attention the figures of quadrupeds and birds sculptured upon the numerous obelisks brought from Egypt to ancient Rome. All these figures possess, in their general character, which alone could be the object of attention to an artist, a perfect resemblance to the species represented, such as we see them at the present day.

On examining the copies made by Kirker and Zoega, we find that, without preserving every trait of the originals in its perfect purity, they have given figures which are easily recognised. We readily distinguish the ibis, the vulture, the owl,