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OF SERPENTS.

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OF all classes of animals there is not one to which mankind have in general so strong an antipathy, as to those which we are now about to consider. Their deformity creates an aversion, and the venom which they possess, and their malignity, both horror and detestation. In vain has man endeavoured to destroy them: formidable in itself, it has checked pursuit, and, from its figure, being capable of effecting its escape, it has found security from those who were inclined to try the encounter, and therefore has still continued to breed in all parts of the world; but in none of the countries of Europe is the serpent tribe at present sufficiently numerous to be truly terrible. The various malignity also that has been ascribed to European serpents of old, is now utterly unknown; there are not above three or four kinds that are dangerous, and the poison of all