

operates in the same manner. A burning pain in the part, easily removeable by timely applications, is the worst effect that we experience from the bite of the most venomous serpents of Europe.

Though, however, Europe is happily delivered from these reptiles, yet in the warm countries that lie within the tropic, as well as in the cold regions of the north, where the inhabitants are few, the serpents propagate in equal proportion. All along the swampy banks of the river Niger, or Oroonoko, where the sun is hot, the forests thick, and the men but few, the serpents cling among the branches of the trees in infinite numbers, and carry on an unceasing war against all other animals in their vicinity. Travellers have assured us, that they have often seen large snakes twining round the trunk of a tall tree, encompassing it like a wreath, and thus rising and descending at pleasure. In these countries, therefore, the serpent is too formidable to become an object of curiosity; it excites more violent sensations.

We are not, however, to reject as wholly fabulous, the accounts left us by the ancients of the terrible devastations committed by a single serpent.