

But happily for mankind, the rapacity of these frightful creatures is often their punishment; for, whenever any of the serpent kind have gorged themselves in this manner, and their body is seen particularly distended with food, they then become torpid, and may be approached and destroyed with safety. They generally, after having surfeited themselves with their prey, seek some retreat, where they lurk for several days together, and remain unwieldy, stupid, helpless and sleepy; the smallest effort is capable of destroying them; they can scarcely make any resistance; they are equally unqualified for flight or opposition; and even the naked Indian does not then fear to assail them.

Carli describes having seen a long serpent of Congo, making its track through the tall grass, like mowers in a summer's day. He says he could not without terror behold whole lines of grass lying levelled under the sweep of its tail; it moved forward in that manner with great rapidity, until it found a proper situation frequented by its prey; there it continued to lurk in patient expectation, and would have remained for weeks together, had it not been disturbed by the natives.

Other