

Other creatures have a choice in their provision; but the serpent has none; he preys indiscriminately upon the buffalo, the tiger, and the gazelle. One would think that the porcupine's quills would be sufficient to protect it; but whatever has life serves to appease the hunger of these devouring creatures: porcupines, with all their quills, have frequently been found in their stomachs, when killed and opened; nay, they are often seen to devour each other.

When in pursuit of their prey, they are most indefatigable; they may be said to be ever on the watch, as they sleep with their eyes open; and from its venom and power, scarcely any animal dare dispute with them a prize until their rapacity is satisfied.

But though these animals are, above all others, the most voracious; and though the morsel which they swallow without chewing, is greater than what any other creature, either by land or water, the whale itself not excepted, can devour, yet no animals upon earth bear abstinence so long as they. A single meal, with many of the snake kind, seems to be the adventure of a season; and is an occurrence for
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