

In the East and West Indies the number of noxious serpents is various; in this country we are acquainted only with one. The viper is the only animal in Great Britain from whose bite we have any thing to fear. In the tropical climates, the rattle-snake, the whip-snake, and the cobra di capello, are the most formidable. From the general notoriety of the particular serpents, and the universal terror which they occasion, it would seem that few others are possessed of such powerful malignity.

*Vipers* are found in many parts of Europe; but the dry, stony, and in particular the chalky countries abound with them. This animal seldom grows to a greater length than two feet; though sometimes they are found above three. The ground colour of their bellies is a dirty yellow; that of the female is deeper. The whole length of the back is marked with a series of rhomboid black spots, touching each other at the points; the sides with triangular ones, the belly entirely black. It is chiefly distinguished from the common ringed snake by the colour, which in the latter is more beautifully mottled, as well as by the head, which is thicker than the body; but particularly by the tail, which, in the viper, though it ends in a point, does