

the skin, (for in general they are too small for this purpose,) is attended with no other symptoms than those of an ordinary puncture: and many of this tribe, as if sensible of their own impotence, cannot be provoked to bite, though ever so rudely assaulted. They hiss, dart out their forky tongues, erect themselves on the tail, and call up all their terrors to intimidate their aggressors, but seem to consider their teeth as unnecessary instruments of defence, and never attempt to use them. Even among the largest of this kind, the teeth are never employed, in the most desperate engagements. When a hare or a bird is caught, the teeth may serve to prevent such small game from escaping; but, when a buffalo or a tiger is to be encountered, it is by the strong folds of the body, by the fierce verberations of the tail, that the enemy is destroyed: for, twining round, and drawing the knot with convulsive energy, this enormous reptile breaks every bone in the quadruped's body, and then, at one morsel, devours it.

Hence we may distinguish the unvenomous tribe into two kinds; first, into those which are seldom found of any considerable magnitude, and that never offend animals larger or more powerful.