

for he had often seen one of the same kind of spiders overcome and kill a toad.

It is not to others alone but also to their own species that this ferocity of temper is dangerous, for they are the most inveterate of enemies to each other. Maupertuis put about a hundred of them together in the same glass; and they scarcely came into contact, when they began to exert all their rage in mutual destruction: there was nothing to be seen but one universal carnage, and in a very few days there remained only fourteen, which had killed and devoured all the rest.

But their unnatural malignity is still more apparent in their cruelty to their offspring. The same author enclosed a female scorpion, big with young, in a glass vessel, and she was seen to devour them as fast as they were excluded; there was but one that escaped the general destruction, and that by taking refuge on the back of its parent; and this soon after revenged the cause of its brethren, by killing the old one in its turn. Such is the ferocious nature of this insect; nay, it is asserted, that when driven to an extremity it will even destroy itself. Goldsmith says that he was informed by a person who made the experiment in America, and on