

that the retrenched parts were necessary for collecting and diffusing them over his whole body in the form of fat, particularly at the top of the head where it gives rise to the horns. It is true, indeed, that castrated stags become fat, but the productions of their horns ceases, their necks and throats never swell, and their fat is very different from that of the perfect stag, which in the rutting season is so very strong as not only to render the flesh uneatable but offensive to the smell, and will corrupt in a very short time, while that of the former may be long preserved sweet, and eaten at all times. Another proof that the horns are produced by a redundance of the nutritive juices may be drawn from the circumstance, that those of stags of the same age will be either thick or thin, in proportion to the supply of food; for the stag which lives in a plentiful country, where he feeds at his pleasure, and rests at his ease, undisturbed by dogs or men, will always have much larger and more beautiful antlers than he who has scanty subsistence, and is disturbed in his repose; so that it is easy to determine by the horns of a stag whether he have inhabited a rich and quiet country. Those also which are in bad health, have been wounded, or frequently disturbed by hunting, have