

that prey which he had reserved for his own excesses; for we sacrifice more to our intemperance than to our real wants. Born to destroy those beings which are subordinate, we should exhaust Nature if she were not exhaustless, and by a fertility superior to our depredations, renovates the destruction we continually make. But it is so ordained that death should contribute to life, and that reproduction should spring from destruction. However great, therefore, may be the waste made by man and carnivorous animals, the total quantity of living matter is never diminished, and if they hasten deaths they are also the cause of new births being produced.

Large animals form but the smallest part of animated nature. The earth swarms with the smaller kinds. Each plant, each grain, each particle of organic matter, contains millions of living atoms. Vegetables appear to be the first fund for subsisting Nature; but this fund, however abundant and inexhaustible, would hardly be sufficient for the still more abundant tribes of insects. Their increase, altogether as numerous, and often more quick, than the reproduction of plants, is a sufficient indication of their superior numbers. Plants are only reproduced once a year, whereas in insects, especially