

chievous; its manners are milder, and to a certain degree it may be tamed, but it is incapable of attachment; how indeed is it possible to love those who are perpetually laying snares for us! Though weak he has more enemies than the rat, from whom he has no means of escape but his agility and minuteness. The owls, birds of prey, cats, weasels, and even rats, make war upon mice, while man, by snares and other means, destroy them by thousands. But for their immense fecundity they could not subsist; they bring forth at all seasons, several times in the year, generally have five or six at a time, and which in less than 15 days are sufficiently strong to shift for themselves. As they so soon attain perfection, their duration of life must be short, a circumstance which must necessarily heighten our ideas of their prodigious multiplication. Aristotle* tells us that he put a pregnant mouse into a vessel with plenty of corn, and that he soon after found 120 mice all sprung from the same mother.

These little animals are not ugly, but have much vivacity and acuteness in their looks; nor is there any foundation for that horror some people hold towards them, but the little
surprises

* Vide Aristotle Hist. Animal. Lib. vi. Cap. 37.