

blood not being renewed by fresh acquisitions of chyle, is then without serum. Besides it is uncertain whether they remain for seven or eight months in a torpid state as most authors pretend. Their burrows are deep, and they live together in great numbers; they therefore must retain their heat some time, and may then feed on the grass they have treasured up. M. Altman, in his Treatise on the animals of Switzerland, says, that the hunters let the marmots remain three weeks or a month unmolested in their cells; that they never dig for them in mild weather, as without this precaution the animals awake, and penetrate deeper in the earth; but that on opening their cells in hard frosts they find them in so torpid a state, as to be carried off without difficulty; it may therefore be concluded that, in all respects, they resemble the dormice, and that if they are longer in a torpid state, it is because the winter is longer in the climates which they inhabit.

These animals produce but once a year, and rarely more than three or four at a time. They grow very fast, their lives do not extend beyond nine or ten years, and this species is neither numerous nor much diffused. The Greeks knew it not, or at least have not mentioned it. Pliny is the first who takes notice of it among the Latins under the name of *mus Alpinus*, or Alpine rat;