

thus leaping among the precipices, they seem rather to have wings than legs, so great is the strength of their nerves. Some writers have pretended that they use their horns for climbing and descending the precipices. I have seen and killed many of these animals, but I never saw them use their horns for that purpose, nor have I ever found any hunter who could confirm this assertion. The chamois ascends and descends precipices with great ease, by the agility and strength of his legs, which are very long; the hind ones being somewhat the longest and always crooked, assist them in throwing themselves forwards, and are of great service by breaking the force of the fall. It is asserted, that when they feed, one of them is deputed to stand sentinel for the security of the rest. I have seen many flocks of these animals, but never observed that to be the case. It is certain that when there are a great number of them there will always be some looking about while the rest are grazing; but there is nothing in this particularly distinguishable from a flock of sheep; for the first who perceives any danger warns all the rest, and in an instant the terror with which he is struck spreads through the whole flock. During the rigours of winter, and in the deep snows, the chamois retreats so