

be strange, where all else is perfect, if the instinctive character or disposition of the animal were at variance with its arms or instruments.

But the idea may still be entertained that the accidental use of the organ may conduce to its more frequent exercise and to the production of a corresponding disposition. Such an hypothesis would not explain the facts. The late Sir Joseph Banks, in his evening conversations, told us that he had seen, what many perhaps have seen, a chicken catch at a fly whilst the shell stuck to its tail. Sir Humphrey Davy relates that a friend of his, having discovered under the burning sand of Ceylon the eggs of an alligator, had the curiosity to break one of them ; when a young alligator came forth, perfect in its motions and in its passions ; for although hatched under the influence of the sunbeams, in the sand, it made towards the water, its proper element : when hindered, it assumed a threatening aspect and bit the stick presented to it. As propensities to certain motions, to which their external organs are subservient, are implanted in animals, so are passions given as the means of their defence or of obtaining food. But this has been well said seventeen hundred years ago. "Take," says Galen, "three eggs, one of an eagle, another of a goose, and a third of a viper ; and place them favourably