

of Asia: and often have we heard of the sunken spirits of the traveller through the weary desert, from the appalling silence that reigns over those regions of eternal desolation; but no sooner is his eye refreshed by the reappearance of vegetation, than he again traces the footsteps and haunts of animals, and welcomes the cheering sound of sensitive beings.

The kind of food which nature has assigned to each particular race of animals has an important influence, not merely on its internal organization, but, also, on its active powers and disposition; for the faculties of animals, as well as their structure, have a close relation to the circumstances connected with their subsistence, such as the abundance of its supply, the facility of procuring it, the dangers incurred in its search, and the opposition to be overcome before it can be obtained. In those animals whose food lies generally within their reach, the active powers acquire but little development: such, for instance, is the condition of herbivorous quadrupeds, whose repast is spread every where in rich profusion beneath their feet; and it is the chief business of their lives to crop the flowery mead, and repose on the same spot which affords them the means of support. Predaceous animals on the contrary, being prompted by the calls of appetite to wage war with living beings, are formed for a more active and martial career; their muscles are more vigorous, their bones are stronger, their limbs more robust, their senses more delicate and acute. What sight can compare with that of the eagle and the lynx; what scent can be more exquisite than that of the wolf and the jackal? All the perceptions of carnivorous animals are more accurate, their sagacity embraces a greater variety of objects, and, in feats of strength and agility, they far surpass the herbivorous tribes. A tiger will take a spring of fifteen or twenty feet, and, seizing upon a buffalo, will carry it with ease on its back through a dense and tangled thicket: with a single blow of its paw it will break the back of a bull, or tear open the flanks of an elephant.