

Their flight is of a different character from that of birds, resembling rather the flitting of a butterfly; when we consider that the peculiar function of bats is to keep within due limits the numbers of crepuscular and nocturnal insects, especially moths, we see how necessary it was that they should be enabled to traverse every spot frequented by the objects their instinct urges them to pursue and devour. For this purpose their wings are admirably adapted, not only by their volume, but by their power of contracting them, and giving them various inflections in flight, so that their speed is regulated by the object they are pursuing.

When we further reflect that their eyes are small and deep-seated, we may conjecture that it requires extraordinary tact and delicacy of sensation in some other organs to supply this defect in its sight. Spallanzani found that blind bats fly as well as those that have eyes; that they avoided most expertly threads of fine silk which he had so stretched as just to leave room for them to pass between them; that they contracted, at will, their wings, if the threads were near, so as to avoid touching them; as well as when they passed between the branches of trees; and also that they could suspend themselves in dark places, such as vaults, to the prominent angles. He deprived the same individuals of other organs of sensation, but they were equally adroit in their flight, so that he concluded they must have some sensiferous organs different from those of other animals, to enable them to thread the labyrinths through which they ordinarily pass.

Dr. Grant observes on this subject—"Bats are nocturnal, but, contrary to what is generally the case with nocturnal animals, their eyes are minute and feeble, and indeed, comparatively speaking, of minor importance, for so exquisite is the sense of feeling diffused over the surface of their membranous wings, that they are able to feel any vibration