

Africa, as in Guinea, and the Gold Coast, at Madagascar, where the natives had domestic cats, and at the Cape of Good Hope, where Kolbe says, there are also, though in a small number, wild cats of a blue colour ; and these blue or rather slate-coloured cats are also found in Asia. Pietro della Valle says*, “ In Persia there are cats of a species which properly belong to the province of Charazan. Their size and form are like those of the common cat ; their beauty consists in their colour, and in their hair which is grey, spotless, and uniform over the whole body, except that it is darker on the back and the head, and shaded lighter on the breast and belly, until it approaches a degree of whiteness ; which agreeable mixture, to use the language of the painters, forms a kind of *chiaro-oscuro* that has a wonderful effect. Besides their hair is shining, soft and delicate as silk, and so long, that, though more smooth than rough, yet it is curled, particularly under the neck. These cats are to the rest of their species, what the water-dogs are to that of the dog. The most beautiful part of their body is the tail, which is very long and covered with hair of five or six inches in length, and which they turn up over their backs like the squirrel, and
the

* Travels of Pietro della Valle, vol. v. pp. 98 and 99.