

CHAPTER IV.

OF CARNIVOROUS ANIMALS.*

HITHERTO we have only treated of useful animals. Those which seem injurious are a far greater number; and though it universally appears that what is hurtful exists in greater plenty than what is serviceable, yet, as in the physical world, evil is subservient to good, for there can in fact, be no evil, since nothing, in effect, injures Nature: If to destroy animated beings is hurtful, is not man who is considered as forming a part of the general system of those beings, the most injurious and pernicious of them? He alone sacrifices and annihilates more living individuals than all the carnivorous tribes. No further, then, are they injurious than because they are the rivals of man, because they have the same appetites, the same fondness for animal food; and because to satisfy a want of the most urgent necessity, they occasionally dispute with him that

* This division is according to the last Paris edition of Buffon. We apprize the reader of this, because he will find included under the denomination of carnivorous animals, some, which he may probably have been accustomed to refer to a different species.