

ishment, by which alone the exuberance of Nature might be restrained. Let us consider any of the inferior species which serve as food to others; herrings, for example, present themselves in millions to our fishermen, and after having fed all the monsters of the northern seas, they contribute to the subsistence of all the nations in Europe for a certain part of the year. If prodigious numbers of them were not destroyed, what would be the effects of their prodigious multiplication? By them alone would the whole surface of the sea be covered. But their numbers would soon prove a nuisance; they would corrupt and destroy each other. For want of sufficient nourishment their fecundity would diminish; by contagion and famine they would be equally destroyed; the number of their own species would not be increased, but the number of those that feed upon them would be diminished. As this remark is alike applicable to any other species, so it is necessary they should prey upon each other; the killing of animals, therefore, is both a lawful and innocent custom, since it is founded in nature, and it is upon that seemingly hard condition they are brought into existence.

The motives, however, which incline us to doubt of this truth do honour to humanity.

Animals,