

associate with any species but his own. His talents are repressed by solitude, and it is by society with his own kind they are brought into action. When alone he has little industry, few tricks, and not sufficient distrust to avoid the most obvious snares. Far from attacking any other animal, he has scarcely art to defend himself; always preferring flight to combat, he only resists when driven to an extremity, and then bites very hard with his teeth.

If then we consider this animal, in a state of nature, or rather in his dispersed and solitary state, we shall find that his internal qualities are not superior to other animals; he has not the genius of a dog, the sense of an elephant, nor the cunning of a fox; and he is rather remarkable for external singularities than for any apparent superiority of internal qualities. The beaver is the only animal who has a flat, oval tail, covered with scales, which serves as a rudder to direct his course in the water; the only one that has his hind-feet webbed, and the toes of his fore-feet separate, which he uses to convey food to his mouth; the only one which resembles a land animal in the fore parts, and approaches the nature of an aquatic one in the hinder, in short he forms the same shade between quadrupeds and fishes, as the bat