

them, and absolutely ignorant of the art of reducing them into subjection. It is by this art known, from the earliest times, to the eastern nations, that their species is diminished. The wild elephants, which they tame, become by their captivity, like so many voluntary eunuchs, which daily drain the source of generation ; but, on the contrary, in Africa, where they are all free, the whole species propagate, and all the individuals constantly concur to its increase. I do not know any other cause for this difference in their numbers, for, in considering the other effects, it seems the south of India, and the east of Africa, are the natural countries, and the most suitable to the elephant. He is there much larger and stronger than in Guinea, or in the other western parts of Africa. He fears excessive heat, and never inhabits the burning sands ; he is most frequently found on the flat countries near the rivers, and never on the hilly parts of Africa ; but in India the most powerful and the most courageous of the species, and who have the strongest and longest tusks, are the elephants of the mountains ; they inhabit the high grounds, where the air being more temperate, the water more pure, and the food more wholesome, they gradually arrive to the full perfection of their nature. In