

the means, which the eastern nations make use of to adulterate the musk*: the merchants must necessarily increase the quantity of it beyond conception, since in one year Tavernier purchased 1673 bags, which supposes an equal number of animals to have been taken. But as this animal is no where domestic, and as the species is confined to some few provinces of the East, it is impossible to be sufficiently numerous to produce so great a quantity of this matter. We cannot, therefore, doubt the greatest part of these pretended bags, or bladders, are only artificial ones made of the skin of the other parts of the animal, and filled with its blood, mixed with a very small quantity of true musk. Its scent is, in fact, the strongest of any yet known; a single grain is sufficient to perfume a great quantity of other matter; the odour of the smallest particle will perfume

* It is said that when the animal is taken, and the musk bag first opened, that the odour is so strong the hunter is obliged to have several folds of linen over his nose and mouth, and that even then it sometimes proves fatal. I am inclined to believe this is true, because the musk decreases in strength with time, and when I dealt in that article, I always found it requisite to stand in the open air, and at a distance from those who moved the bladders. This drug is, however, very frequently adulterated by the hunters with the blood of the animal, and by the merchants with the blood of oxen, lead, &c. But the natives of India have various methods of detecting this adulteration, they discover it by the taste, and weight, but mostly with a thread steeped in the juice of garlic which they draw through the bag with a needle, and if it retains that smell they are certain of its being adulterated. *Voyage de Chardin.*