

OF THE SCAPULA.

IF we attend to the scapula, or shoulder-blade, we shall better understand the influence of the bones of the shoulder on the motions and speed of animals. The scapula is that flat triangular bone (see page 47), which lies on the ribs, and is cushioned with muscles. On its anterior angle there is a depressed surface, the glenoid cavity or socket for the arm bone. The scapula shifts and revolves with each movement of the arm. The muscles converge from all sides towards it, from the head, spine, ribs, and breast bone. These acting in succession, roll the scapula and toss the arm, in every direction. When the muscles combine in action, they fix the bone, and either raise the ribs in drawing breath, or give firmness to the whole frame of the trunk.

Before I remark further on the influence of the scapulæ on the motions of the arms, I shall give an instance in proof of a very important function which they perform. Hearing that there was a poor lad of fourteen years of age, born without arms, and whose unhappy condition had excited the benevolence of some ladies, I sent for him. I found that indeed he had no arms, but he had clavicles and scapulæ. When I made this boy draw his breath, the shoulders were raised, that is to say, the scapulæ were drawn up, were fixed, and became the points