

and it can never rise to more than five or six feet above the surface of the water.

A species of lizard, called the *Draco Volans*, has a singularly constructed apparatus, which appears like two wings, affixed to the sides of the back, and quite independent of either the fore or the hind extremities. By the aid of these moveable flaps, the animal is able to descend from the tops of trees, or flutter lightly from branch to branch; but this is the utmost that it can accomplish by means of these imperfect organs. The construction of these anomalous members is highly curious in a physiological point of view; as showing how Nature, in effecting a new purpose, is inclined to resort to the modification of structures already established as constituent parts of the frame, in preference to creating new organs, or such as have no prototype in the model of its formation. Frequent proofs of this law, indeed, are afforded by the comparative examination of the anatomy of the organs of progressive motion. The ribs, in particular, are often the subject of these conversions to uses very different from their ordinary function, which is that of assisting in respiration. Thus, we have seen that in the Tortoise they are expanded to form the carapace, uniting with corresponding dilatations of the sternum, and sterno-costal appendages, in composing a general osseous incasement to the body. In Serpents, again, the ribs are employed as organs of progressive motion; performing the functions of legs, and having affixed to their extremities the abdominal scuta, by way of feet. The cervical ribs of the *Cobra de Capello*, or hooded snake of the East Indies, are employed for the mechanical purpose of supporting an expansion of the skin of the neck, which forms a kind of hood, capable of being raised or depressed at the pleasure of the animal.* These ribs are entirely unconnected with the respiration of the serpent.

In the *Draco volans*, which was to be furnished with in-

* Phil. Trans. for 1804, p. 346.