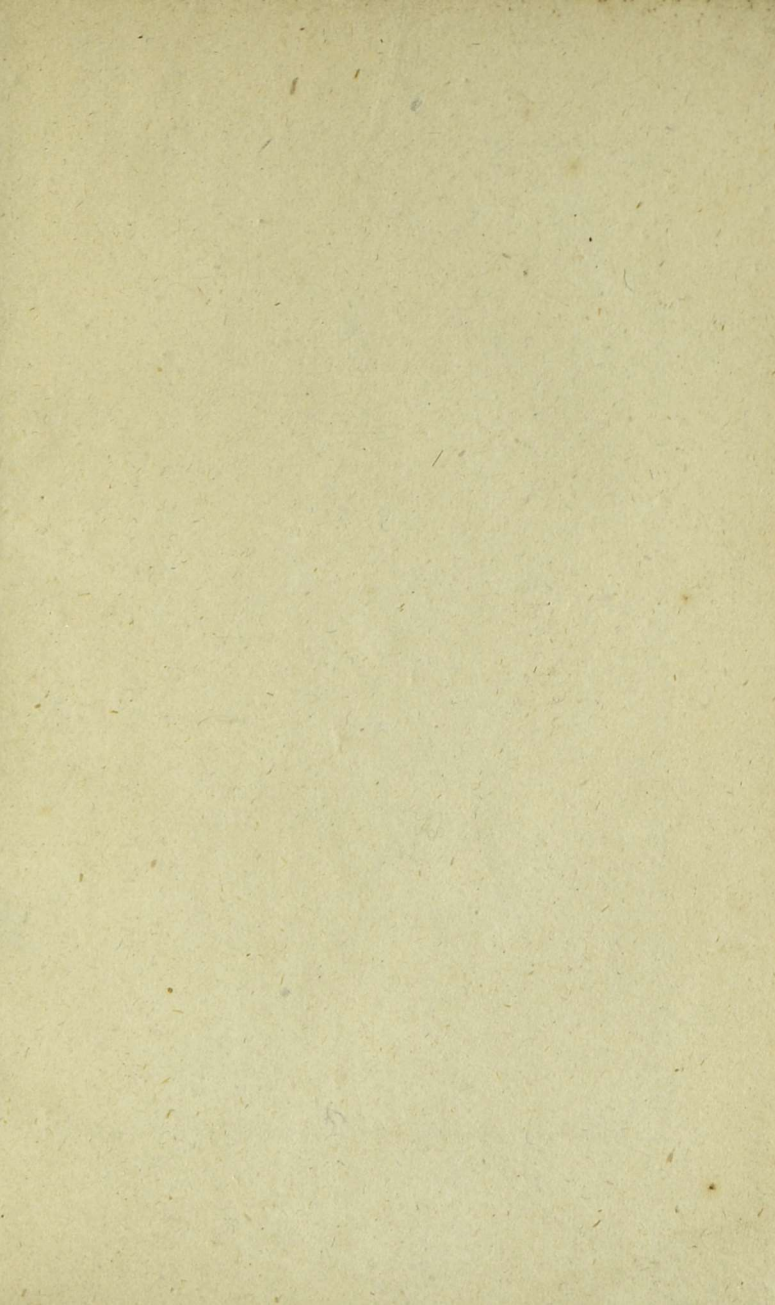


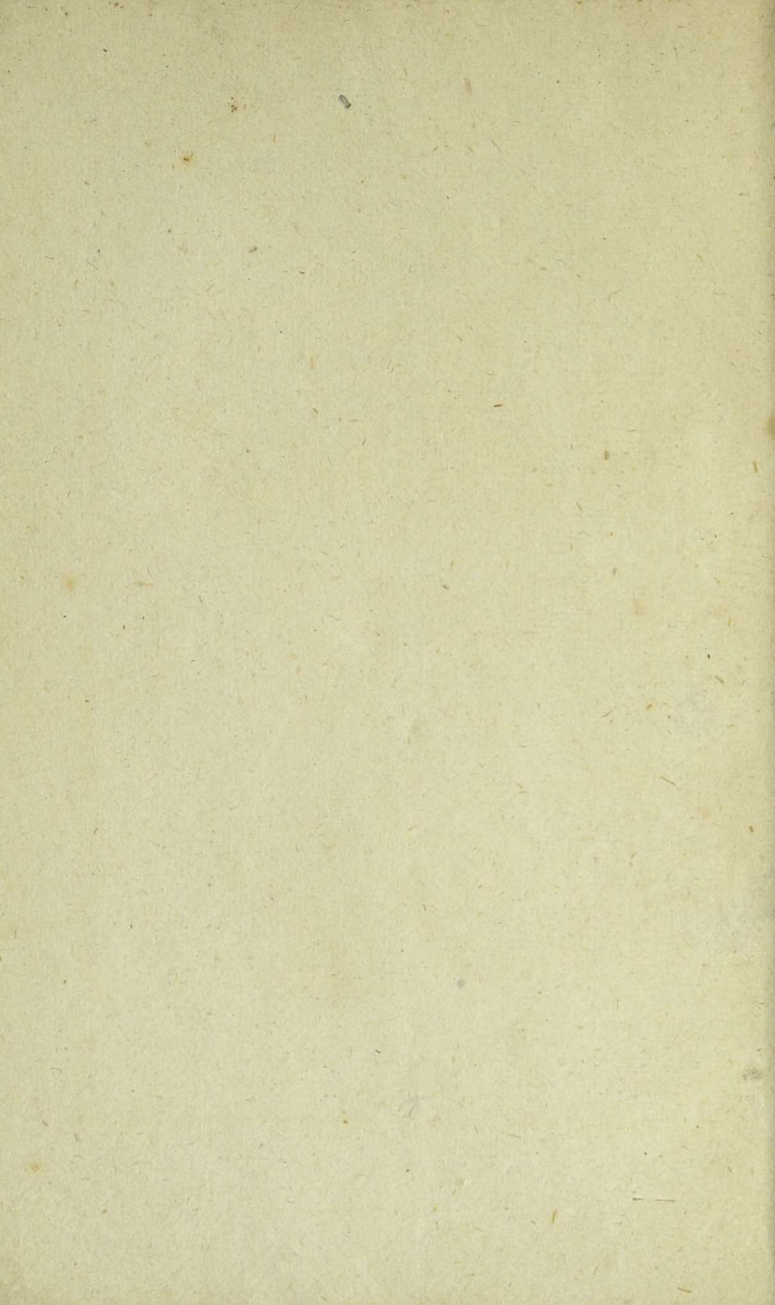
A
NATURAL HISTORY
OF
BRITISH QUADRUPEDS.

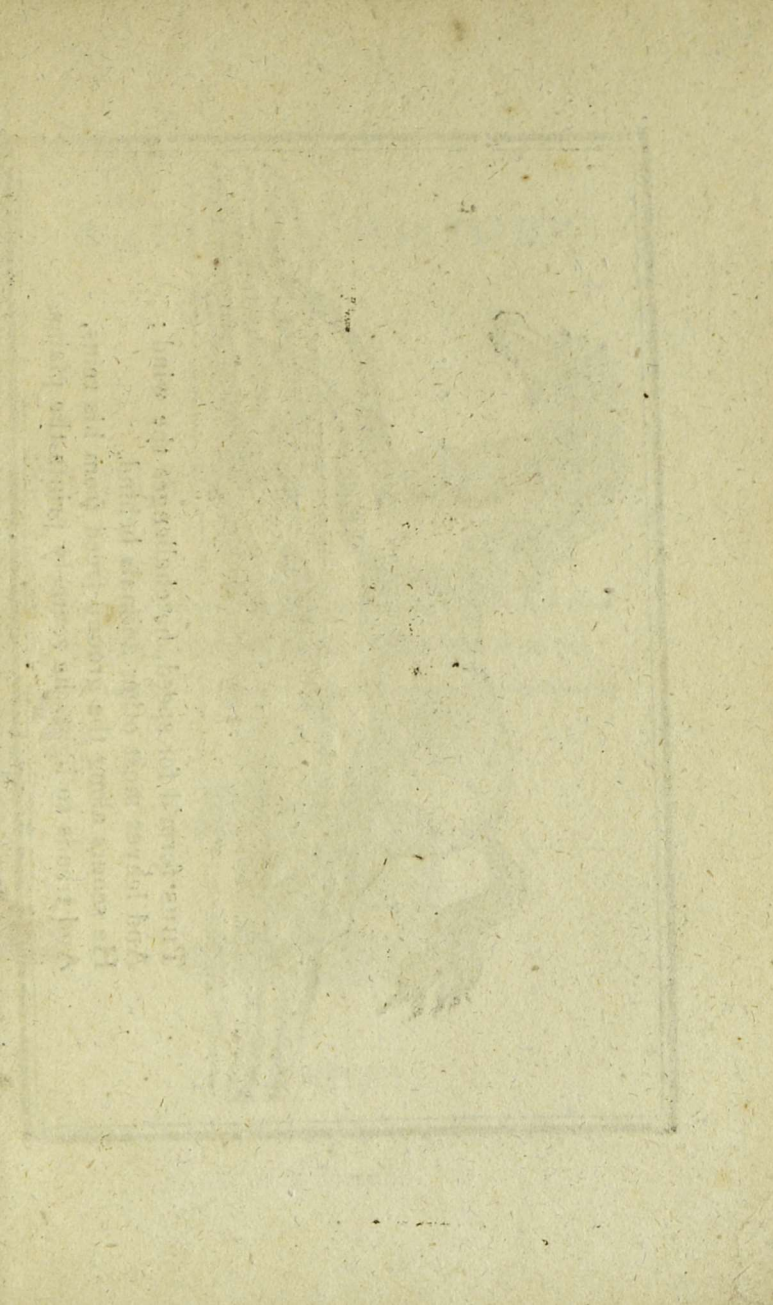
THIRTY-TWO ENGRAVINGS ON WOOD.

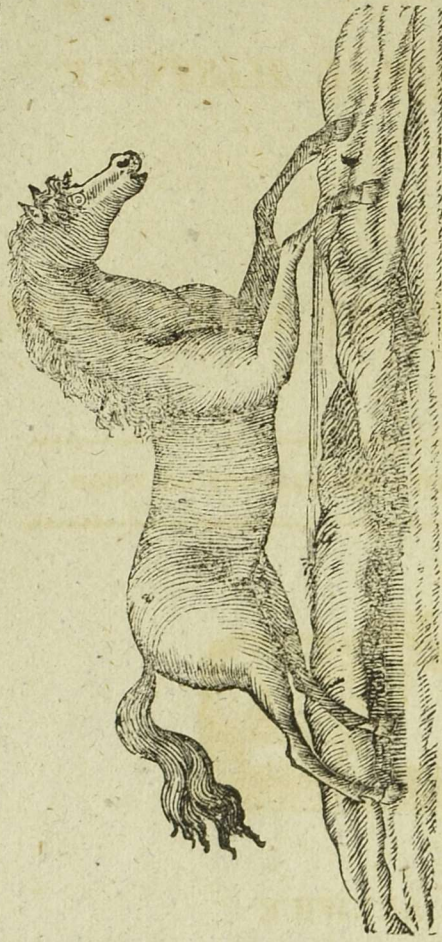


ALNWICK:
PRINTED AND SOLD WHOLESALE AND RETAIL,
BY W. DAVISON.









THUS form'd for speed, he challenges the wind ;
And leaves most other animals behind.
He scours along the ground freed from his reins,
And treads so light, he scarcely prints the plains.

NATURAL HISTORY

OF

BRITISH QUADRUPEDS.

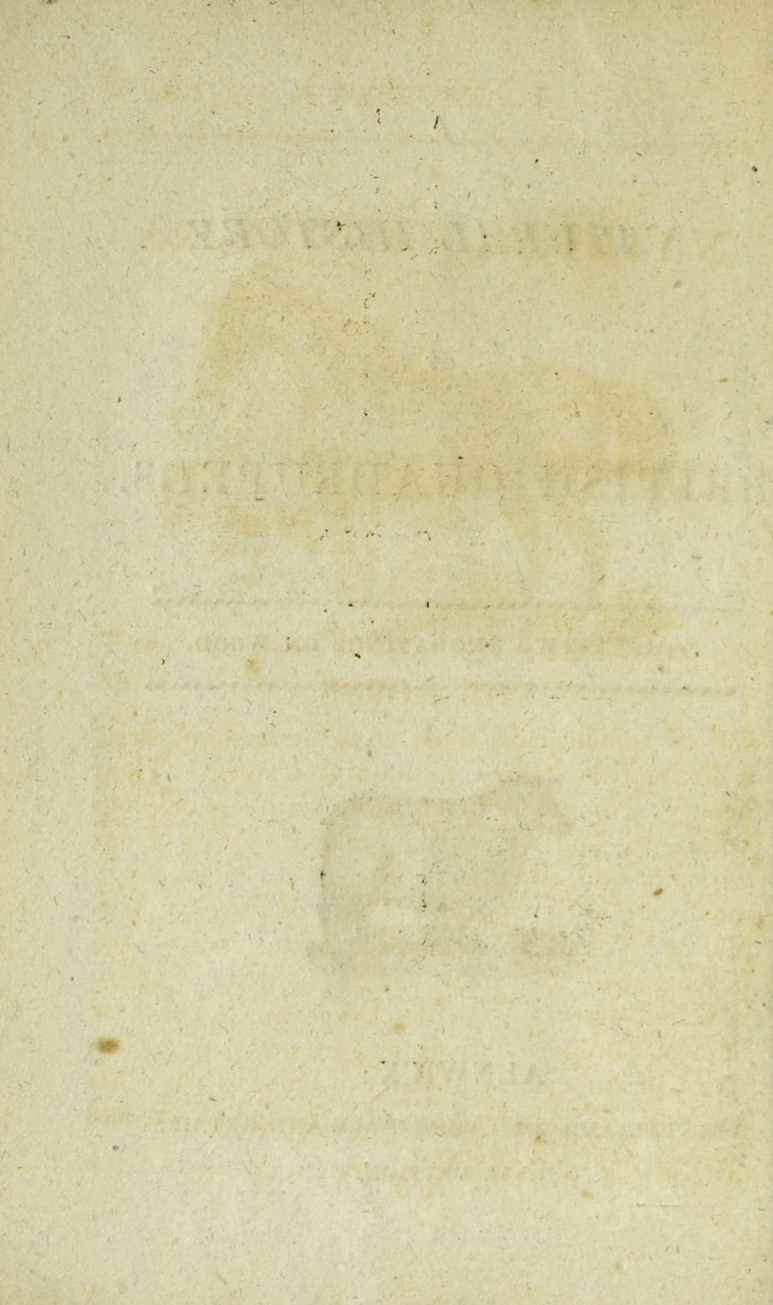
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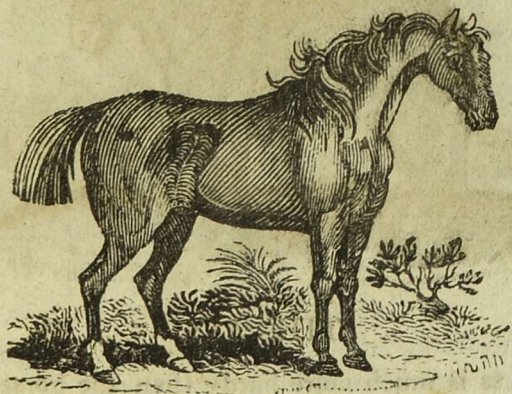
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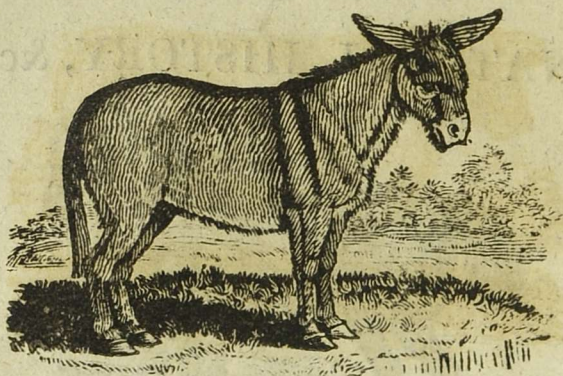


NATURAL HISTORY, &c.



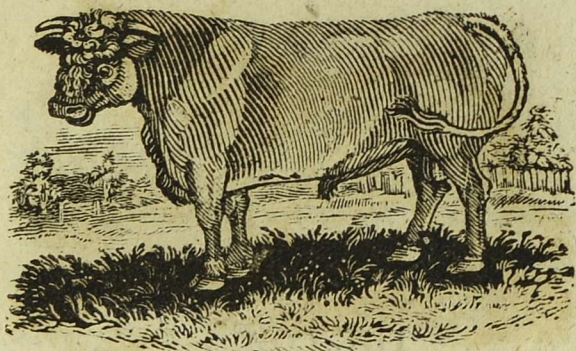
THE HORSE.

OF all quadrupeds, those of the horse kind merit a distinguished place in natural history. Their beauty, strength, activity, and usefulness, all contribute to render them the principal objects of our curiosity and attention. Horses are bred now in most parts of the world. Those of Turkey, Arabia, and Persia, are accounted better limbed and proportioned than many others; but the English race horses may justly claim the precedence of those of most European nations, and are not, perhaps, inferior in strength and beauty to those of any other country. The horse grows till the age of six, and usually lives till twenty.



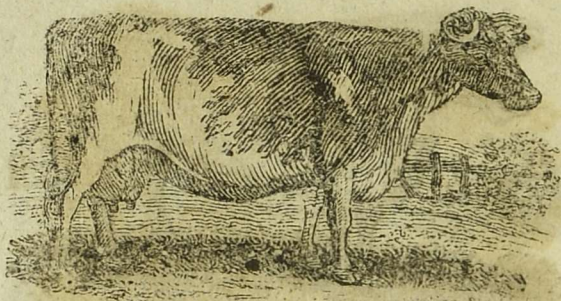
THE ASS.

THE ass is much more hardy than the horse, and liable to fewer diseases. He is usually of a dun colour, and has the form of a cross upon his back and shoulders. The female goes above eleven months with young, and never produces more than one foal at a time. The ass is three or four years in coming to perfection, and lives till twenty, or twenty-five; he sleeps much less than the horse, and never lies down for that purpose, unless greatly fatigued. The ass is a beast of burden, and of greater strength than most animals of his size, but of a stupid and sluggish nature. He is sometimes greatly attached to his owner, whom he scents at a distance, and distinguishes from others in a crowd. The milk of the female is used in consumptions, and much esteemed by physicians.



THE BULL.

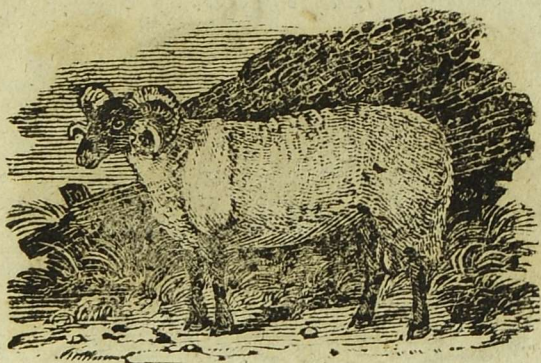
THE bull is a very strong, fierce creature; his strength in all parts of his body is very great; but especially about his head and neck. His forehead seems to be made for fight; having short, thick horns, with which he can toss up into the air a large dog, &c. which he furiously receives again as it falls, and sometimes so gores it with his horns, that at length he destroys it. The bull is a very short-lived animal for his size and strength, seldom exceeding sixteen years. He arrives to the greatest perfection in England, the climate and verdure of our plains best agreeing with his constitution. The pains taken by the English nation to bring their horned cattle to perfection has been attended with complete success; for by mixing them with foreign breeds they have increased their beauty as well as their strength.



THE COW.

THIS animal, in respect to size and nature, is something like the bull, of which she is the female, but of all quadrupeds she seems most liable to alteration from the quality of her pasture. This is more observable in other countries than in our own. Thus Africa is remarkable for the largest and the smallest cattle of this kind, as are also Poland, Switzerland, and several other parts of Europe. Among the Eluth Tartars, where the pastures are remarkably nourishing and luxuriant, the cow becomes so large that few men can reach the tip of its shoulders; but in France, where the animal is stinted in its food, and driven from the richest pasturage, it greatly degenerates.

The cow has seldom more than one calf at a time, and goes about nine months. Her nature and use being so well known we decline a farther description.



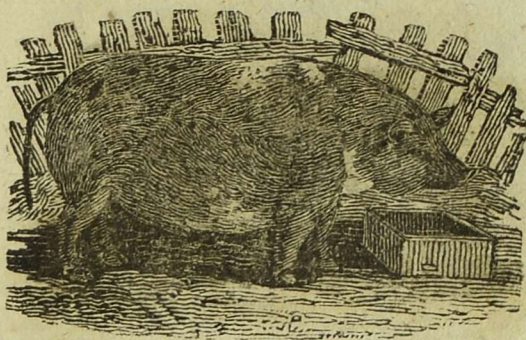
THE SHEEP.

THE sheep is a creature universally known, being one of the chief for human food. Its wool is of great use for clothing. Most countries have plenty of this creature, but none exceed the English sheep. They seldom live ten years, though a creature of a moderate size, and well covered. They are of a weak constitution, and subject to many disorders; the greatest part of which are contagious. The ram generates not till the third year, and continues fit for generation till the eighth. The ewe continues to bear as long as she lives; she goes with young about twenty weeks, and frequently brings forth two at a time. The sheep, in its present domestic state, is of all animals the most inoffensive and defenceless: with its liberty it seems to have been deprived of its swiftness and cunning.



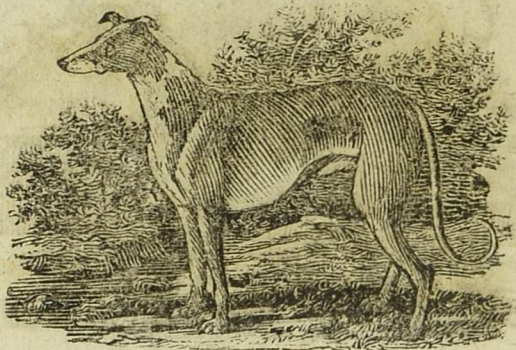
THE GOAT.

THIS animal seems, in every respect, better adapted for a life of savage independence than the sheep. It is naturally possessed of a greater share of instinct, and is considerably stronger, swifter, and more courageous. Lively, playful, and capricious, it does not easily submit to be confined, but chooses its own pastures, delights in climbing precipices, and is often seen reposing in peaceful security upon the summit of the highest precipices. It seems, indeed, better pleased with the heathy mountain, or the shrubby rock, than the cultivated fields of art; and its favourite food consists of the tops of boughs, or the tender bark of young trees. The milk of the goat is sweet, nourishing, and medicinal, and not so apt to curdle upon the stomach as that of the cow. The goat produces two young at a time, sometimes three, rarely four.



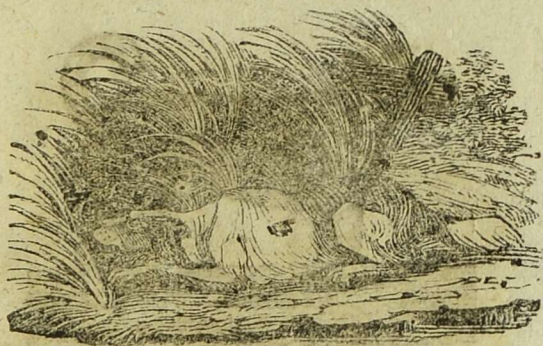
THE HOG.

THIS animal, in a natural state, subsists principally upon roots and vegetables, and seldom attacks any other animal, being content with such provisions as are obtained without danger: yet if it happens to meet with a dead and even putrescent carcass, it immediately seizes upon it, as eligible prey. In a domestic state it is the most sordid and brutal animal in nature; the awkwardness of its form seems to influence its appetites, and it appears to make choice only of what other animals find the most offensive. Stupid, inactive, and drowsy, its life is a complete round of sleep and gluttony; and if supplied with sufficient food, its flesh soon becomes a greater load than its legs are able to support. The sow goes with young about four months, and produces six, eight, or twelve in a litter.



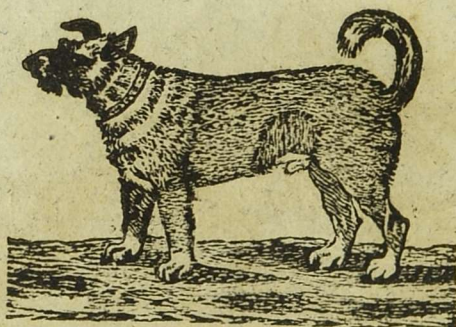
THE GREYHOUND.

THE greyhound is well known at present, and was formerly held in such estimation, that it was the peculiar companion of a gentleman; who, in ancient times, was known by his horse, his hawk, and his greyhound. It has a long body, sharp head, full eye, long mouth, little ears, with thin gristles in them, a straight neck and full breast; his fore and hind legs are long and straight; and his ribs round, strong, and full of sinews, and taper about the belly. It is the swiftest of the dog kind, and easily trained for the chase when twelve months old. It courses by sight, and not by scent, as other hounds do; and is supposed to outlive all the dog tribe.



THE POINTER

Is of foreign origin, as its name seems to imply ; but it is now naturalized in this country, which has long been famous for dogs of this kind ; the greatest attention being paid to preserve the breed in its utmost purity. This dog is remarkable for the aptness and facility with which it receives instruction. It may be said to be almost self-taught ; whilst the English setter requires the greatest care and attention in breaking and training to the sport ; the pointer, however, is not so durable and hardy, nor so able to undergo the fatigues of an extensive range. It is chiefly employed in finding partridges, pheasants, &c. either for the gun or net. It is said, that an English nobleman (Robert Dudley, duke of Northumberland) was the first that broke a setting-dog to the net.



THE TERRIER.

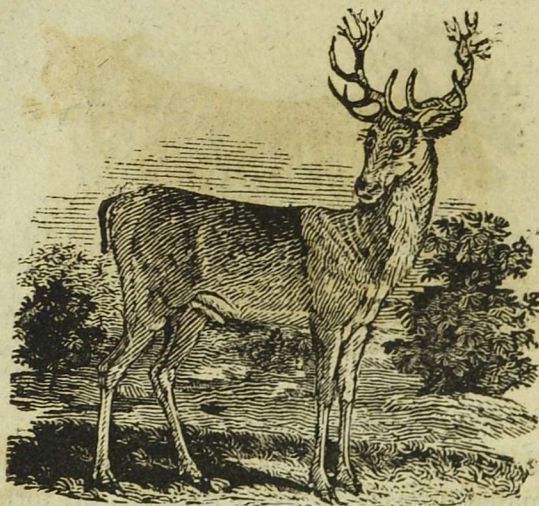
THE terrier has a most acute smell, is generally an attendant on every pack of hounds, and is very expert in forcing foxes or other game out of their coverts. It is the determined enemy of all the vermin kind; such as Weasels, Fomarts, Badgers, Rats, Mice, &c. It is fierce, keen, and hardy; and, in its encounters with the Badger, sometimes meets with very severe treatment, which it sustains with great courage and fortitude; and a well-trained veteran dog frequently proves more than a match for that hard-biting animal.

There are two kinds of terriers,—the one rough, short-legged, long-backed, very strong, and most commonly of a black or yellowish colour, mixed with white; the other is smooth, sleek, and beautifully formed, having a shorter body, and more sprightly appearance.



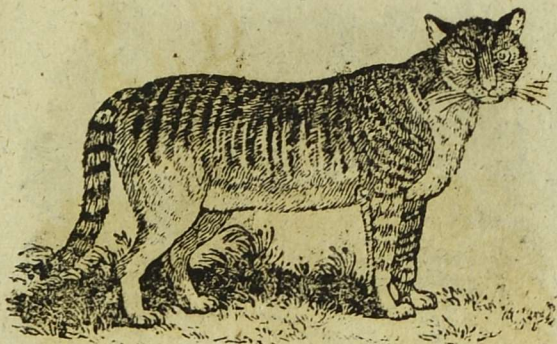
THE FALLOW-DEER.

THE fallow-deer is less than the stag, and has palmated horns. In other respects, his form and manners are the same; yet he never associates with the stag, though he inhabits the same forests. The colours of this species are various; reddish, dark-brown, spotted, and often white. Venison, or the flesh of the fallow-deer, is in high estimation, is delicate and nourishing food; hence herds of them are often kept in gentlemen's parks. If the herds be large, they divide themselves into smaller parties, among which contests frequently happen; they then attack one another, and in these trials of skill, exhibit wonderful proofs of order and obstinacy. In the rutting season, he is not so much infuriated as the stag, but is frequently involved by rivalry, in terrible conflicts.



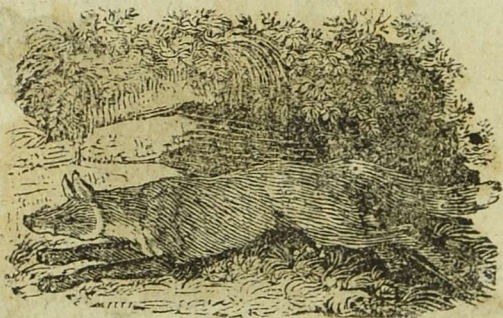
THE STAG.

THIS animal is the most beautiful of the deer kind; the elegance of his form, the lightness of his motions, the flexibility of his limbs, his bold branching horns, which are annually renewed, his grandeur, strength, and swiftness, give him a decided pre-eminence over every other inhabitant of the forest. The age of the stag is known by his horns. The first year exhibits only a short protuberance, which is covered with a hairy skin; the next year, the horns are straight and single; the third year produces two antlers, the fourth three, and when arrived at the sixth year, the antlers amount to six or seven on each side.



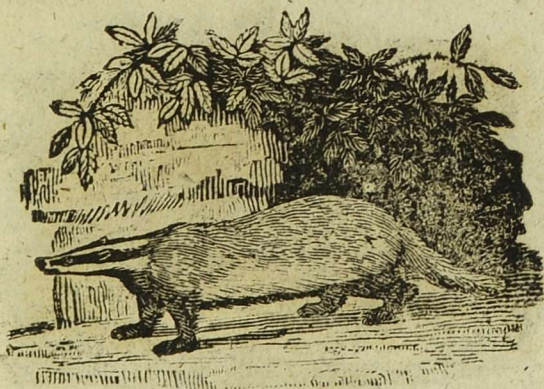
THE CAT.

THE cat, when young, is of all animals the most sportive and playful, but as its years increase, it begins to grow more serious, and also more artful. Although cats cannot absolutely see in the dark, as is often asserted, yet they see much better in the twilight, or when it is dusky, than in broad day-light. During the day the pupil of this animal's eye is contracted, but in the dusk it resumes its natural roundness. The nocturnal meetings of these creatures seem a curious peculiarity. They call one another together by loud cries, and sometimes meet in great numbers; when they meet, they look at one another in a menacing manner, writhe themselves into a thousand threatening postures, and without any apparent cause, fly upon one another with the most furious rage, with teeth and claws wounding and lacerating one another.



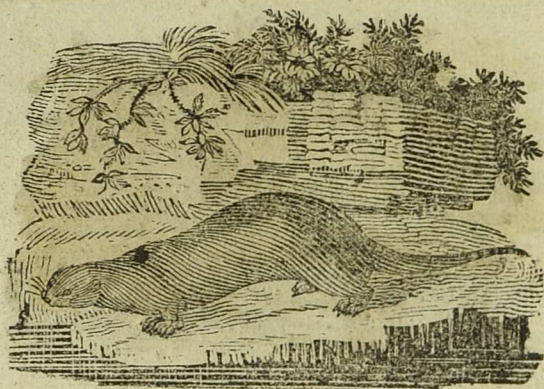
THE FOX.

THE fox has ever been famous for his cunning and arts, and he partly merits his reputation. He generally keeps his kennel at the edge of a wood, and yet within a short distance from some cottage; from thence he listens to the cackling of the fowls, scents them at a distance, makes an attack with the first opportunity, and seldom returns without his booty. If he be able to get into the yard, he begins by leveling all the poultry, and carrying off a part of the spoil, hides it at some convenient distance, and again returns to the charge. The she fox produces but once a year, and seldom has more than four or five cubs at a litter. To these she is peculiarly attentive, and if she suspects that the place of their retreat has been discovered, and that her young have been disturbed during her absence, she removes them, one after another, in her mouth to a place of security.



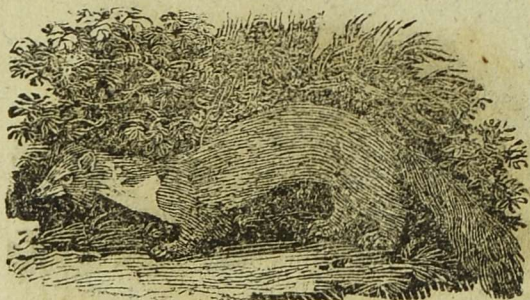
THE BADGER.

THE badger is a solitary, stupid animal, that seeks refuge remote from man, and digs itself a deep winding hole, with great assiduity; its legs being very strong, and its claws stiff and horny. It seldom ventures far from its habitation, as it runs but slowly, and can find safety only in the strength of its retreat. When surprised by dogs at some distance from its hole, it falls upon its back, combats with desperate resolution, and seldom dies unrevengeed on its enemies. The badger sleeps the greatest part of its time, and is particularly fat during the winter season. Its flesh is eaten by the poor of some countries, but is very rank and ill-tasted. When taken young the badger is easily tamed, and after a short time, will play with the dogs, and follow its master about the house.



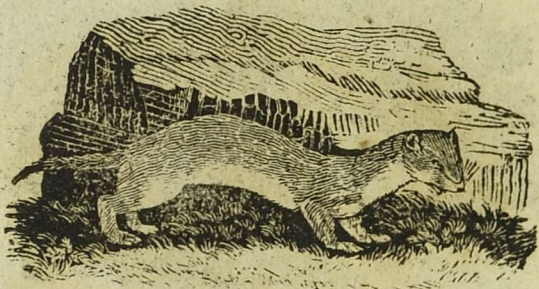
THE OTTER.

THE otter is an amphibious animal, that lives both on land and in water, yet it never goes into the sea. It abounds in all nations where there are rivers, or fish-ponds. It is less than the beaver, and resembles it in most parts except in the tail. It has a rough skin, and the hair of it is very soft and neat, like the hair of the beaver; its feet and tail are like a dog's, and teeth very sharp. Though it lives in and upon the water, yet it is forced to take breath. It is exceedingly swift in pursuit of its prey, which are mostly fish, with which he fills his den so full that it stinks to that degree as to corrupt the air. In the winter-time it lives chiefly upon land, and feeds upon fruit, bark of trees, &c. It is hunted with dogs, and by men with sharp spears.



THE MARTIN.

THE martin may be styled the most beautiful of all British beasts of prey. Its head is elegantly formed; its eyes are lively; its ears are broad, rounded, and open; its back, its sides, and tail are covered with a fine downy fur, with longer hair intermixed, the roots of an ash colour, the middle of a bright chesnut, and the points black: the head is brown, with a slight cast of red; the legs and feet of a chocolate colour, and the throat and breast white. The martin is a lively active animal; he runs up rough walls with great dexterity, and finds an easy access to the pigeon and the hen houses. He seizes birds in their nests, and preys on mice, rats, and moles, and is remarkably fond of honey. The martin differs from the polecat, being about four or five inches longer, its nose is flatter, and its cry is sharper and more piercing. They are chiefly hunted for their skins.



THE WEASEL.

THE weasel has a long thin body. There are some of this species of different colours, as red, black, and some all white. There are two sorts, one a domestic weasel, living in houses, barns, &c. the other wild, living in the woods and mountains. The domestic weasel kills and destroys rats, mice, moles, hens, chickens, eggs, &c. As their prey is precarious, they sometimes live a long time without food; and if they happen to fall in where it is plentiful, they destroy all about them before they attempt to satisfy their appetite. Its robberies are always committed in the night, and sleeps most part of the day. It is said the young can be tamed and rendered familiar and caressing, by stroking it often on the back, and threatening, and even beating it when it bites. The weasel, when irritated, has a foetid smell. It is common in temperate and warm climates, but rare in northern regions.



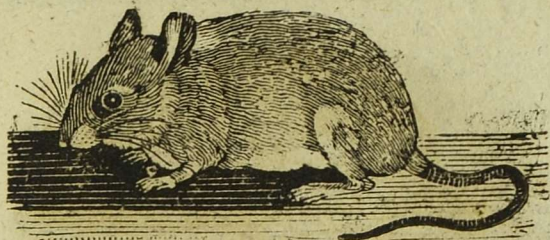
THE SQUIRREL.

THE squirrel is a pretty little animal, which is only half wild: it is embellished by a fine spreading tail, like a plume of feathers; which it raises above its head, and forms into a kind of shade. It is a less quadruped than almost any other four-footed animal. It generally sits upright, and uses its fore feet as hands. Instead of hiding itself in the earth, it is continually in the air; by its lightness and activity it resembles the feathered tribe; and like them rests upon the branches of trees, leaps from one to another, and in the highest of them, builds its nest. It avoids water more than the earth; and it is even asserted, that when this animal is obliged to cross a river or stream, it uses the bark of a tree, or some light woody substance, as a boat. In summer, it deposits a quantity of nuts in the cavity of some old tree, to which it has recourse for provision in winter.



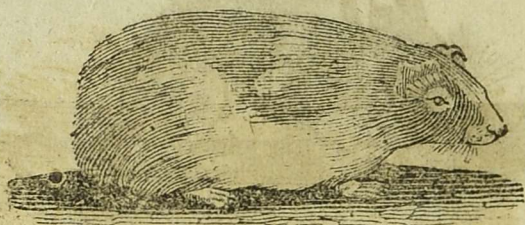
THE RAT.

THERE are two kinds of rats known in this country,—the black rat, which was formerly universal here, but is now very rarely seen, having been almost extirpated by the large brown kind generally distinguished by the name of the Norway rat.—This formidable invader is now universally diffused through the whole country; from whence every method has been tried in vain to exterminate it.—It is about nine inches long; of a light brown colour, mixed with tawny and ash; the throat and belly are of a dirty white, inclining to gray; its feet are naked, and of a pale flesh colour: the tail is as long as the body, covered with minute dusky scales, thinly interspersed with short hairs. It is a bold, fierce little animal; and, when closely pursued, will turn and fasten on its assailant.—Its bite is keen, and the wound it inflicts is painful and difficult to heal, owing to the form of its teeth, which are long, sharp, and of irregular form. The surest method of killing them is by poison.



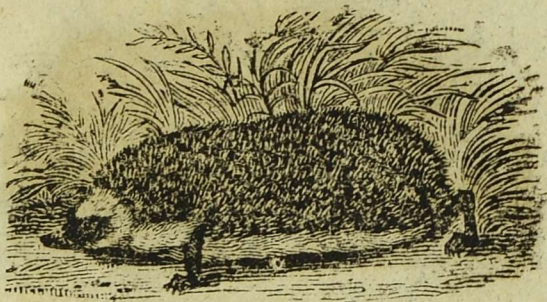
THE MOUSE.

THIS little animal, when viewed without the disgust and apprehension which usually accompanies the sight of it, is very beautiful; its skin is sleek and soft, its eyes bright and lively, all its limbs are formed with exquisite delicacy, and its motions are smart and active. The mouse brings forth several times in the year, and generally from six to ten each litter. The young are produced without hair, and in little more than fifteen days are able to subsist by themselves; so that the increase is prodigious. This animal is diffused in great numbers over almost every part of the world. It seems a constant attendant on man, and is only to be found near his dwelling. Its enemies are numerous and powerful, and its means of resistance weak and inconsiderable; its minuteness seems to be its best security; and it is saved from utter extinction only by its amazing fecundity. Some few of this species are of a pure white colour; but whether they are a permanent kind, or only an accidental variety, cannot well be determined.



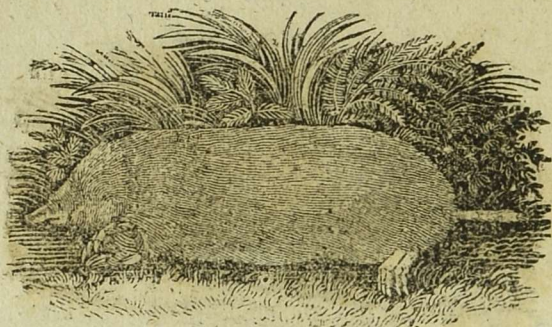
THE GUINEA PIG.

THE Guinea pig, though a native of the warm climates of Brazil and Guinea, lives and breeds in temperate and even in cold countries, provided it is properly taken care of. Its skin is of little or no value; and the flesh, which is very indifferent food, might be greatly improved, were they reared in warrens, and supplied with a proper choice of herbs. These animals attain their full growth in eight or nine months. The female never goes with young above three weeks; and has been known to bring forth when only two months old; the first litter amounts to four or five, the second to five or six, and the rest to seven or eight, and sometimes to ten or eleven; and she does not suckle her young above twelve or fifteen days. A thousand might be raised from a single couple in one year, did they not frequently destroy each other, or perish by the cold and wet. They feed on all sorts of herbs, especially on parsley, which it prefers to bran, flour, or bread. Of apples and other fruit it is exceedingly fond.



THE HEDGE-HOG.

THE hedge-hog, at first sight, seems to bear a strong resemblance to the porcupine ; but, on examination, it is found to differ materially, both in the structure of its teeth, and the shortness of its spines or quills. The length of the animal varies from six to ten inches ; the head, back, and sides are covered with spines ; but the nose, breast, and belly are covered with fine soft hair. The legs are short, and almost bare ; the toes on each foot are five in number, long, and separated ; and the tail, which is about an inch long, is so concealed by the spines, as to be scarcely visible. They generally reside in small thickets, and feed on fallen fruits, roots, and insects ; they are also very fond of flesh meat, either raw or roasted. They chiefly wander about by night, and during the day lie concealed in their holes. They may be in some degree domesticated.



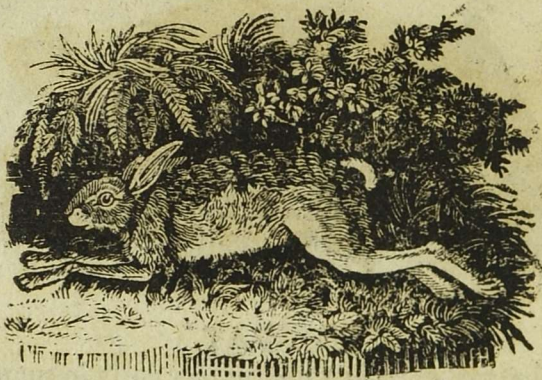
THE MOLE.

THE mole is about the bigness of a rat. The snout is like a hog's; its feet are like a bear's, and legs short; its toes, with which it digs up the earth, have sharp nails. It lives in the earth upon worms. It has no ears that can be discerned; yet it hears in the ground perfectly well. It is generally of a blackish colour, with short smooth hair, and soft as wool. Its eyes are commonly shut or covered. Moles multiply so fast, that were their numbers not constantly reduced, they would perhaps do more mischief below ground, by destroying the roots of plants, than is effected above by all the ravages of quadrupeds and birds. The nest in which they deposit their young is of a curious structure, and is erected in the largest of those hillocks we see in the fields. It is above the surface of the ground, and cannot be affected by ordinary inundations.



THE BAT.

THE bat makes its first appearance early in summer, and commences its flight in the dusk of the evening; principally frequenting the sides of woods and shady walks, and skimming along the surface of pieces of water. Its flight is a laborious irregular movement. It feeds upon gnats, moths, and nocturnal insects of every kind, and appears only in the most pleasant evenings, when such prey is abroad. At other times it remains concealed in the chink of some dilapidated building, or the hollow of a tree. Thus, even in summer, it sleeps away the greatest part of its time; never venturing out by day-light, nor in rainy weather. The bat is about the size of a mouse, covered with a fur of a dusky brown colour; its wings are an extension of skin all round the body, stretched on every side when it flies, by the four inner toes of the fore feet, which are enormously long, and serve like masts that keep the sail spread.



THE HARE.

THE hare is a timid and defenceless animal, and doomed to perpetual dangers in the field. When taken young, it is easily tamed, it is gentle and caressing, but it takes every opportunity of flying off to regain its liberty. Hares never go far from the place of their birth. When hunted, they never remove to a great distance, and always return to their seats. Whatever number of hares may be in the neighbourhood, every one has a seat where it sits in solitude and silence. Hares sleep most part of the day, at night they have something like fellowship, and leap, gambol, and chase one another by moon-light, but the most accidental noise will alarm and separate them in an instant. They feed on herbs, leaves, and grain; they eat the bark of all young trees, except that of the alder and lime, and are fond of birch, parsley, and pink.

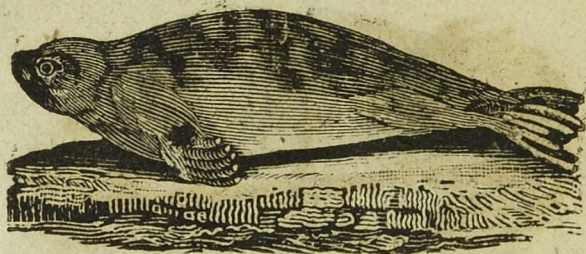


THE RABBIT.

NOTWITHSTANDING the general resemblance which exists between the rabbit and the hare, their habits and propensities are very different, as well as their fecundity, and several other distinguishing characteristics; and they also seem to have a natural aversion to each other.

The rabbit lives to the age of nine or ten years. It prefers a warm climate; and in Sweden, and other northern regions, it cannot be reared but in houses. It is common, however, in all the temperate countries of Europe. In Spain they had once become so numerous, and were found so destructive to vegetation, that the inhabitants were obliged to introduce ferrets from Africa, in order to diminish their numbers.

They abound in every part of Great Britain, especially in Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Lincolnshire, and on the wilds of Yorkshire; but in many of these parts several warrens are lately converted into sheep pasture, or tillage, and the number of rabbits is consequently diminished.



THE SEAL.

THE seal is an amphibious animal, which seems to constitute one of the last steps of gradation between the race of quadrupeds and fishes, and which, although generally classed by naturalists among the former, appears to partake in a greater degree of the nature and habits of the latter. It is found, with some variation of species, in almost every quarter of the globe; but chiefly abounds in the northern seas of Europe, Asia, and America, and in the unfrequented regions towards the south pole.

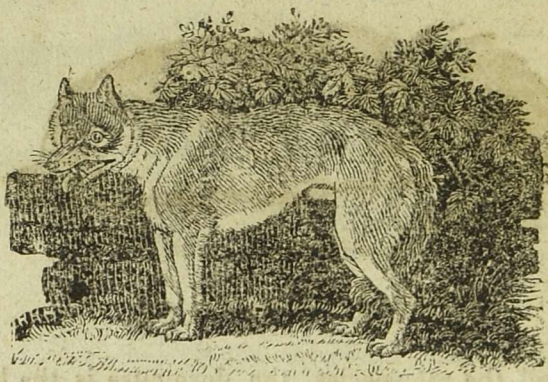
The usual length of this animal is five or six feet. It is covered with short hair of various colours, smooth and shining. It has five toes on each foot, which are armed with strong sharp claws, whereby it is enabled to climb the rocks, on which it delights to bask in the sun. When taken young these animals are capable of being tamed, and will even answer to a name, and follow their masters like a dog.



THE DORMOUSE.

Of all the rat species, the dormouse is the least ugly. Its eyes are sparkling, its tail is tufted, and its hair is rather fair than red. It never lives in houses. It is seldom found in gardens, but chiefly frequents the woods, where it finds a shelter in the hollow of some old tree.

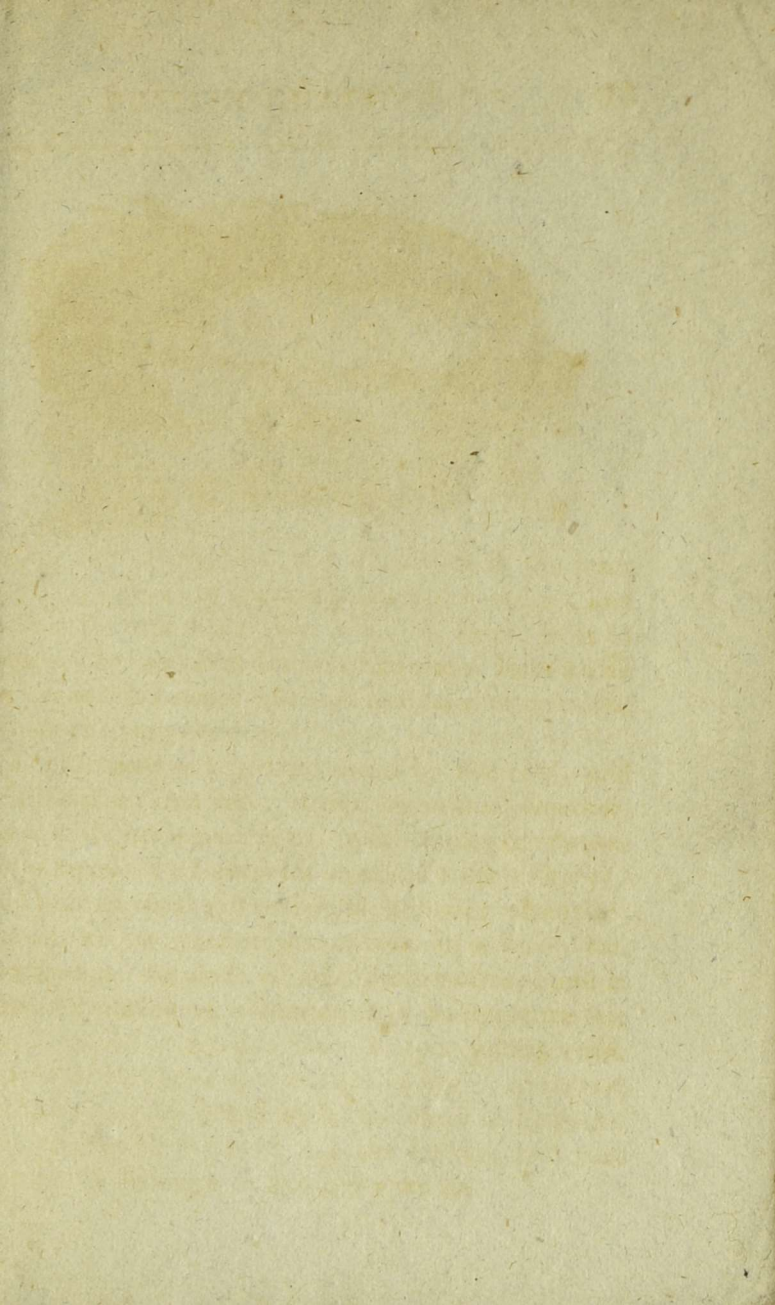
The dormouse becomes torpid by the cold, and rolls itself up in a ball; it revives in mild weather, and hoards up nuts and other dry fruits for future sustenance. It forms its nest in trees, like the squirrel, though generally in a lower situation, among the branches of a nut-tree, in a bush, &c. The nest is composed of herbs interwoven, and is about six inches in diameter, has no aperture but at the top, and contains three or four young ones. Ray, who had seen this animal in Italy, observes, that the small dormouse which is found in England is not red upon the back like the Italian, and that it probably belongs to another species.

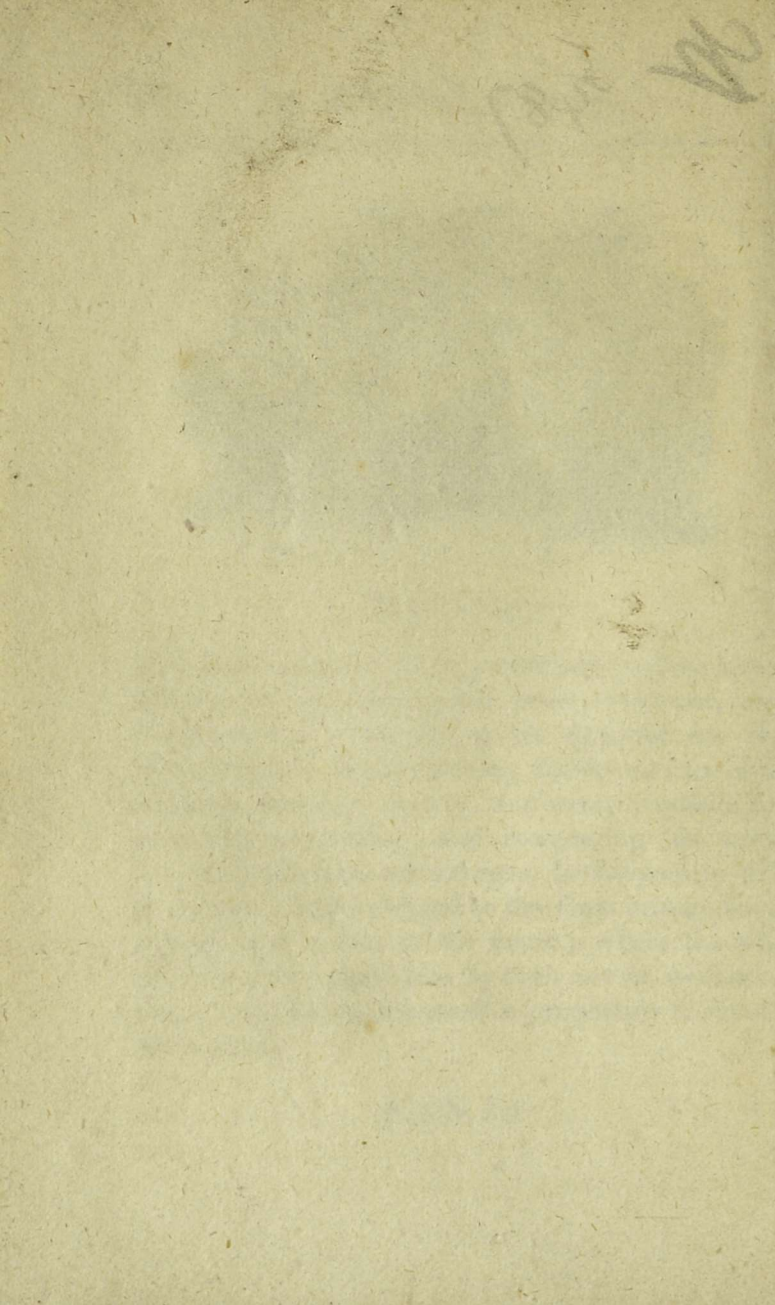


THE WOLF.

THE wolf is one of those quadrupeds, whose appetite for animal food is the most vehement, and whose means of satisfying his appetite are the most various: Nature having furnished him with strength, cunning, agility, and every requisite for pursuing, overtaking, and conquering his prey. Yet with all these advantages, he frequently dies of hunger; being obliged to flee from human habitations, and to live in the forest; where the wild animals either elude him by their art or swiftness, or are supplied in too small a proportion to satisfy his rapacity.

FINIS.





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