

mals lodge together. As the whole operation is performed on the declivity of a mountain, this innermost apartment, is alone horizontal. Both branches of the Y are inclined. One of the branches descends under the apartment, and follows the declivity of the mountain. This branch is a kind of aqueduct, and receives and carries off the excrements of the animals; and the other, which rises above the principal apartment, is used for coming in and going out. The place of their abode is well-lined with moss and hay, of which they lay up great store during the summer. They are social animals. Several of them live together, and work in common when forming their habitations. Thither they retire during rain, or upon the approach of danger. One of them stands centinel upon a rock, while the others gambol upon the grass, or are employed in cutting it, in order to make hay. If the centinel perceives a man, an eagle, a dog, or other dangerous animal, he alarms his companions by a loud whistle, and is himself the last that enters the hole. As they continue torpid during winter, and, as if they foresaw that they would then have no occasion for victuals, they lay up no provisions in their apartments. But, when they feel the first approaches of the sleeping season, they shut up both passages to their habitation; and this operation they perform with such labour and solidity, that it is more easy to dig the earth any where else than in such parts as they have thus fortified. At this time they are very fat, weighing sometimes twenty pounds. They continue to be plump for three months; but afterwards they gradually decline, and, at the end of winter, are extremely emaciated. When seized in their retreats, they appear rolled up in the form of a ball, and covered with hay. In this state, they are so torpid that they may be killed without seeming to feel pain. The hunters select the fattest for eating, and keep the young ones for faming. Like the dormice, and all the other animals which sleep during winter, the marmots are revived by a gradual and gentle heat; and it is remarkable, that those which are fed in houses, and kept warm, never become torpid, but are equally active and lively the whole year.

The habitation where moles deposit their young merits a particular description; because, it is constructed with peculiar intelligence, and because the mole is an animal with which we are well acquainted. They begin by raising the earth, and forming a pretty high arch.— They leave partitions, or a kind of pillars, at certain distances, beat and press the

earth, interweave it with the roots of plants, and render it so hard and solid, that the water cannot penetrate the vault, on account of its convexity and firmness. They then elevate a little hillock under the principal arch; upon the latter they lay herbs and leaves for a bed to their young. In this situation they are above the level of the ground, and, of course, beyond the reach of ordinary inundations.— They are, at the same time, defended from the rains by the large vault that covers the internal one, upon the convexity of which they rest along with their young.— This internal hillock is pierced on all sides with sloping holes, which descend still lower, and serve as subterraneous passages for the mother to go in quest of food for their herself and her offspring. These by-paths are beaten and firm, extend about twelve or fifteen paces, and issue from the principal mansion like rays from a centre. Under the superior vault we likewise find remains of the roots of the meadow saffron, which seem to be the first food given to the young. From this description it appears, that the mole never comes abroad but at considerable distances from her habitation. Moles, like the beavers, pair; and so lively and reciprocal an attachment subsists between them, that they seem to disrelish all other society. In their dark abodes they enjoy the placid habits of repose and solitude, the art of securing themselves from injury, of almost instantaneously making an asylum or habitation, and of procuring a plentiful subsistence without the necessity of going abroad. They shut up the entrance of their retreats, and seldom leave them, unless compelled by the admission of water, or when their mansions are demolished by art.

The nidification of birds has at all times deservedly called forth the admiration of mankind. Their nests, in general, are built with such exquisite art, that an exact imitation of them exceeds the power of human skill. Their stile of architecture, the materials they employ, and the situations they select, are as various as the different species. Individuals of the same species, whatever region of the globe they inhabit collect the same materials, arrange and construct them in the same form, and make choice of similar situations for erecting their temporary habitations; for the nests of birds, those of the eagle-kind excepted, after the young have come to maturity, are for ever abandoned by the parents.

To describe minutely the nests of birds would be a vain attempt. Such descriptions could not convey an adequate idea of