

herself a nest in places unfrequented and free from noise and *disturbance*! When she has laid her eggs in such a manner that she can cover them, what care does she take in turning them frequently, that all parts may partake of the *vital* warmth! When she leaves them to provide for her necessary subsistence, how punctually does she return before they have time to cool! In summer you find her giving herself greater freedom, and quitting her care for above two hours together; but in winter, when the rigour of the season would destroy the young one, she grows more assiduous in her attendance, and stays away but half the time. With how much nicety and attention does she help the chick to break its prison! not to take notice of her covering it from the *injuries* of the weather, providing it proper nourishment, and teaching it to help itself; nor to mention her forsaking the nest, if the young one in due time does not make its appearance. But, at the same time, the hen that has all this seeming ingenuity, considered in other *respects*, is without the least glimmerings of thought or common *sense*. She mistakes a piece of chalk for an egg, and sits upon it in the same manner; she is *insensible* of any increase or diminution in the number of those she lays; she does not distinguish between her own and those of another species; and, when the birth appears of never so different a bird, will cherish it for her own. In all those circumstances which do not carry an *immediate* regard to the subsistence of herself or her species, she is a very idiot. There is not, in my opinion, any thing more mysterious in nature than this instinct in animals, which thus rises above reason, and falls entirely short of it.

ADDISON.