

animals. His skin constitutes a soft and warm fur, which, in many parts of Europe, is used for muffs and tippets, for the lining of winter garments, and for robes of state. In some parts of the continent, his flesh is eaten as food.

In many countries, and in a special manner in England, hunting the fox is a favourite field-sport. Gentlemen on horseback hunt him with slow-hounds; and he has been known to run fifty miles, and after all to save his life, by wearing out the dogs as well as the horses and huntsmen.

His various stratagems for obtaining prey and avoiding his enemies, have justly procured for him the character of cunning; so that "as cunning or crafty as a fox" has grown into a proverb. Many instances of his having this quality in great perfection are related. A fox had been frequently chased, and always escaped by appearing to go over a precipice; and it commonly happened, that several of the dogs, in the eagerness of pursuit, went after him and were killed. At last, on exploring the place, the huntsmen were so fortunate as to discover, that the fox had his den just under the brow of the precipice, and that by laying hold of a strong twig that grew beside it, with his teeth, he had the art of swinging himself into the hole; out of which, however, he was able to scramble at any time without danger. But human skill baffles the cunning of the fox. The huntsmen cut off the twig, and next time Reynard was pursued, he ran to catch it as formerly, trusting that it was there still; but of course, he missed his aim, and

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