

V U L T U R E.

Nostrils differing in different species.

Tongue large and fleshy.

Head, cheeks, and often neck, either naked, or covered only with down, or short hairs; the neck retractile.

Craw often hanging over the breast.

Legs and feet covered with great scales; the first joint of the middle toe connected to that of the outmost by a strong membrane.

Claws large, little hooked, and very blunt.

Insides of the wings covered with down.

The bill, according to *Linneus*, would seem to characterise this genus; but, in my opinion, is not sufficient, as that of many of the *Falcon genus* is strait at the base likewise, though, for the most part, the point is more crooked and sharp than in the *Vulture*.—The want of feathers on part of the head, and sometimes the whole head and neck, with the manners below mentioned, seem to make a better distinction; but after all, not so clear as one would wish.

It has been observed, that the *true Vulture* does not kill it's prey by *choice*; coveting only such animals as are found dead, and becoming putrid. Indeed, it has been observed, that large flocks have alighted on a sick or maimed animal, and, attacking it all together, finished it's existence: but I will only suppose that to happen when much pressed by hunger; all authors agreeing, that, if left to themselves, they would rather feed on flesh which inclines to putridity, than on fresh meat. Their smell, for this purpose, is exquisite; scenting a carcase many miles off, and flying to it from all quarters.

In this circumstance of their disposition I am clear, from the *Car-*
rion