which are covered aſſume a different and more becoming plumage.

The beauty of a part of this plumage, particularly the long feathers that compoſe the wings and tail, is the chief reaſon that man has been ſo active in purſuing this harmleſs bird to its deſerts, and hunting it with no ſmall degree of expence and labour. The ancients uſed thoſe plumes in their helmets; our military wear them in their hats; and the ladies make them an ornament in their dreſs. Thoſe feathers which are plucked from the animal while alive are much more valued than thoſe taken when dead, the latter being dry, light, and ſubject to be worm-eaten.

Beſide the value ot their plumage, ſome of the ſavage na­tions of Africa hunt them alſo for their fleſh ; which they conſider as a dainty. They ſometimes also breed theſe birds tame, to eat the young ones, of which the females are ſaid to Be the greateſt delicacy. Some nations have obtained the name of *Struthophagi,* or ostr*ich eaters,* from their peculiar fondneſs for this food ; and even the Romans themſelves were not averſe to it. Even among the Europeans now, the eggs of the oſtrich are ſaid to be well taſted, and ex­tremely nouriſhing ; but they are too ſcarce to be fed upon, although a single egg be a sufficient entertainment for eight men.

As the ſpoils of the oſtrich are thus valuable, it is not to Be wondered at that man has become their most aſſiduous purſuer. For this purpoſe, the Arabians train up their best and fleeteſt horſes, and hunt the oſtrich ſtill in view. Per­haps, of all other varieties of the chase, this, though the moſt laborious, is yet the moſt entertaining. As ſoon as the hunter comes within sight of his prey, he puts on his horſe with a gentle gallop, ſo as to keep the oſtrich ſtill in sight ; yet not ſo as to terrify him from the plain into the moun­tains. Of all known animals, the oſtrich is by far the swifteſt in running ; upon obſerving himself, therefore purſued at a diſtance, he begins to run at firſt but gently ; either inſenſible of his danger, or hire of eſcaping. In this ſituation, he ſomewhat reſembles a man at full ſpeed ; his wings, like two arms, keep working with a motion correſpondent to that of his legs ; and his ſpeed would very ſoon ſnatch him from the view of his purſuers ; but, unfortunately for the ſilly creature, inſtead of going off in a direct line, he takes his courſe in circles ; while the hunters ſtill make a ſmall courſe within, relieve each other, meet him at unex­pected turns, and keep him thus ſtill employed, ſtill follow­ed, for two or three days together. At laſt, ſpent with fa­tigue and famine, and finding all power of eſcape impoſſible, he endeavours to hide himſelf from thoſe enemies he cannot avoid, and covers his head in the land or the firſt thicket he meets. Sometimes, however, he attempts to face his pur­ſuers ; and though in general the moſt gentle animal in na­ture, when driven to desperation he defends himſelf with his beak, his wings, and his feet. Such is the force of his motion, that a man would be utterly unable to withſtand him in the ſhock.

The Struthophagi have another method of taking this bird : they cover themſelves with an oſtrich’s ſkin, and paſſing up an arm through the neck, thus counterfeit all the motions of this animal. By this artifice they approach the oſtrich, which becomes an eaſy prey. He is ſometimes alſo taken by dogs and nets ; but the moſt uſual way is that mentioned above.

When the Arabians have thus taken an oſtrich, they cut its throat ; and making a ligament below the opening, they ſhake the bird as one would rinſe a barrel; then taking off the ligature, there runs out from the wound in the throat a conſiderable quantity of blood mixed with the fat of the ani­mal ; and this is conſidered as one of their greateſt dainties. They next flea the bird ; and of the ſkin, which is ſtrong and thick, ſometimes make a kind of veſt, which anſwers the purpoſes of a cuirass and a buckler.

There are others who, more compaſſionate or more pro­vident, do not kill their captive, but endeavour to tame it, for the purpoſes of ſupplying thoſe feathers which are in ſo great requeſt. The inhabitants of Dara and Lybia breed up whole flocks of them, and they are tamed with very little trouble. But it is not for their feathers alone that they are prized in this domeſtic ſtate ; they are often ridden upon and uſed as horſes. Moore aſſures us, that at Joar he law a man travelling upon an oſtrich ; and Adanſon aſſerts, that at the factory of Podore he had two oſtriches, which were then young, the ſtrongeſt of which ran ſwifter than the beſt Engliſh racer, although he carried two negroes on his back. As ſoon as the animal perceived that it was thus loaded, it ſet off running with all its force, and made ſeveral circuits round the village ; till at length the people were obliged to ſtop it by barring up the way. How far this ſtrength and ſwiftneſs maybe uſeful to mankind, even in a polished ſtate, is a matter that perhaps deferves inquiry.

IT. The Cassowary (the *Casuarius* of Linnaeus, and *Galeated Caſſowary* of Dr Latham) was ſirſt brought into Eu­rope from Java by the Dutch about the year 1597. It is nearly equal in ſize to the oſtrich, but its legs are much thicker and ſtronger in proportion. This conformation gives it an air of ſtrength and force, which the fierceneſs and An­gularity of its countenance conſpire to render formidable. It is five feet and an half long from the point of the bill to the extremity of the claws. The legs are two feet and an half high from the belly to the end oſ the claws. The head and neck together are a foot and an half ; and the largeſt toe, including the claw, is five inches long. The claw alone of the leaſt toe is three inches and a half in length. The wing is ſo ſmall that it does not appear, it being hid under the feathers of the back. In other birds, a part of the feathers ſerve for flight, and are different from thoſe that ſerve mere­ly for covering ; but in the caſſowary all the feathers are of the fame kind, and outwardly of the ſame colour. They are generally double, having two long ſhafts, which grow out of a ſhort one, which is fixed in the ſkin. Thoſe that are double are always of an unequal length ; for ſome are 14 inches long, particularly on the rump, while others are not above three. The beards that adorn the ſtem br shaft are about half-way to the end, very long, and as thick as an horſe-hair, without- being ſubdivided into fibres. The ſtem or ſhaft is flat, ſhining, black, and knotted below; and from each knot there proceeds a beard ; likewise the beards at the end of the large feathers are perfectly black, and to­wards the root of a grey tawny colour ; ſhorter, more ſoft, and throwing out fine fibres like down; ſo that nothing ap­pears except the ends, which are hard and black ; becauſe the other part, compoſed of down, is quite covered. There are feathers on the head and neck ; but they are ſo ſhort and thinly ſown, that the bird’s ſkin appears naked, except towards the hinder part of the head, where they are a little longer. The feathers which adorn the rump are extremely thick ; but do not differ in other reſpects from the reſt, ex­cepting their being longer. The wings, when they are de­prived of their feathers, are but three inches long ; and the feathers are like thoſe on other parts of the body. The ends of the wings are adorned with five prickles, of different lengths and thickneſs, which bend like a bow: theſe are hollow from the roots to the very points, having only that flight ſubſtance within which all quills are known to have. The longeſt of theſe prickles is 11 inches ; and it is a quar­ter of an inch in diameter at the root, being thicker there than towards the extremity ; the point ſeems broken off.