

Some of our countrymen, engaged of late in conducting one of the principal mining associations in Mexico, that of Real del Monte, carried out with them some English greyhounds of the best breed, to hunt the hares which abound in that country. The great platform which is the scene of sport is at an elevation of about nine thousand feet above the level of the sea, and the mercury in the barometer stands habitually at the height of about nineteen inches. It was found that the greyhounds could not support the fatigues of a long chase in this attenuated atmosphere, and before they could come up with their prey, they lay down gasping for breath; but these same animals have produced whelps which have grown up, and are not in the least degree incommoded by the want of density in the air, but run down the hares with as much ease as the fleetest of their race in this country.

The fixed and deliberate stand of the pointer has with propriety been regarded as a mere modification of a habit, which may have been useful to a wild race accustomed to wind game, and steal upon it by surprise, first pausing for an instant, in order to spring with unerring aim. The faculty of the retriever, however, may justly be regarded as more inexplicable and less easily referrible to the instinctive passions of the species. M. Majendie, says a French writer in a recently published memoir, having learnt that there was a race of dogs in England which stopped and brought back game of their own accord, procured a pair, and, having obtained a whelp from them, kept it constantly under his eyes, until he had an opportunity of assuring himself that, without having received any instruction, and on the very first day that it was carried to the chase, it brought back game with as much steadiness as dogs which had been schooled into the same manœuvre by means of the whip and collar.

Attributes of animals in their relation to man.—Such attainments, as well as the habits and dispositions which the shepherd's dog and many others inherit, seem to be of a nature and extent which we can hardly explain by supposing them to be modifications of instincts necessary for the preservation of the species in a wild state. When such remarkable habits appear in races of this species, we may reasonably conjecture that they were given with no other view than for the use of man and the preservation of the dog, which thus obtains protection.

As a general rule, I fully agree with M. F. Cuvier, that, in studying the habits of animals, we must attempt, as far as possible, to refer their domestic qualities to modifications of instincts which are implanted in them in a state of nature; and that writer has successfully pointed out, in an admirable essay on the domestication of the mammalia, the true origin of many dispositions which are vulgarly attributed to the influence of education alone.* But we should go too far if we did not admit that some of the qualities of

* *Mém. du Mus. d'Hist. Nat.*—Jameson, Ed. *New Phil. Journ.*, Nos. 6, 7, 8.