

Thus immured, the pholas lives in darkness, indolence, and plenty; having once formed its mansion, it appears to live perfectly satisfied with the retreat it has chosen, nor ever after attempts its emancipation; the influx of the sea-water, that enters at the small original cavity, satisfies all its wants, and without any other food, they not only thrive, but frequently grow to seven or eight inches long, and are thick in proportion.

Besides the security, which they find in this stony habitation, their bodies are defended by a shelly covering, and which grows upon them after they have taken up their residence in the body of the rock. These shells take different forms, and are often composed of a different number of valves; sometimes six, and sometimes not more than three; sometimes the shell resembles a tube with holes at either end, one for the mouth, and the other for voiding the excrements.

“ Yet (says Goldsmith) the pholas thus shut  
“ up, is not so solitary an animal as it would at  
“ first appear; for though it is immured in its  
“ hole without egress, though it is impossible  
“ for the animal, grown to a great size, to get  
“ out by the way it made in, yet many of this  
“ kind