

of them, I have observed to have been used very like wings or oars, the several legs being sometimes close joined, at other times opened, again bent, extended, and according to the several necessities and will of the sailor. They cannot be strictly said to fly for they are carried into the air by external force; but they can, in case the wind suffer them, steer their course, and perhaps mount and descend at pleasure: and for the purpose of rowing themselves along the air, it is observable that they always take their flight backwards; that is, their head looking a contrary way, like a sculler upon the Thames. It is scarcely credible to what height they will mount; which yet is precisely true, and a thing easily to be observed by one that shall fix his eye some time on any part of the heavens, the white webs, at a vast distance, very distinctly appearing from the azure sky; but this is in autumn only, and that in very fair and calm weather. In a letter to Mr. Ray, dated January, 1670, speaking of the height spiders are able to fly to, he says, “ Last
“ October I took notice that the air was very
“ full of webs; I forthwith mounted to the
“ top of the highest steeple on the Minster, in
“ York, and could there discern them yet ex-
“ ceeding high above me.”