

animals originated in the water. When fishes were thrown on dry land, their pectoral fins and scales, split up from evaporation, became feathers, while the posterior fins were, at the same time, changed into feet. Those animals which crawled under the water became seals and terrestrial quadrupeds. In his account of the origin of man, De Maillet certainly cannot be charged with incredulity, and he entertains his readers with many extraordinary narrations. He informs us that the Dutch sometimes catch Mermen, and some of them could speak Dutch, and one of them asked for a pipe of tobacco. He also mentions a sailor who had fallen overboard, and lived in the water for eight years, until he became covered with scales from the squammifying power of the sea.

Passing over the opinions of Rodig, who, as a German, merely expounded and systematised the notions of De Maillet, we may devote a few sentences to the system of La Marck. The writer we have mentioned is an instance of the not unfrequent occurrence of great scientific aptitude in one direction, with little capacity for other lines of investigation. As a systematist, whether in botany or zoology, his merits are very great, while in matters requiring abstract reasoning he shows a singular deficiency of judgment. His notions respecting the origin