

by rotatory motions often repeated, works a burrow that receives the shell, and the animal is buried with only the extremity of its siphon emerging. How admirable is this contrivance of Divine Wisdom to enable it to bury its shell, which it could scarcely otherwise accomplish.

We easily comprehend the use of terrestrial burrowing animals; by this habit they not only construct a habitation for themselves, but by the mould they throw out they help to fertilize and renew the soil; but with regard to the aquatic burrowers on the barren sands which the tides submerge, we only see one end answered, the welfare of the individual who forms them: but they likewise doubtless answer some more general purpose connected with a plan of Providence which daily advances towards its completion, though we do not clearly comprehend what that end is. I was once conversing with a fisherman of a village on the N. E. coast of Norfolk on the subject of his trade, when amongst other matters he observed, that from some alteration in the sands of that coast the number of small shell-fish had considerably diminished of late years, which, being the principal food of soles and other flat fish, had occasioned a great diminution of them also. An over-abundance of burrowing bivalves may undermine the beach to that degree that the sea, in high tides and stormy weather, may make such a breach upon it as may carry away, or bury too deep, a large proportion of these shell-fish, which would cause the fishes to leave the coast for one better provided with food for them.

No animal has been more celebrated for the mischief it has occasioned as a *timber-borer* than that of which I shall next give some account. I am speaking of the *ship-worm*.* Though the animals of some of the land-shells, as the snails,† do him some injury in his garden, man seldom suffers very

* *Teredo navalis*.

† *Helix*.