

the rapidity of their growth for the first few weeks compels them to act perseveringly in effecting that object, for the raspings of its crypt would clog the animal if they were left in it. When the siphon is distended with water, the animal, closing the orifices of its tubes, suddenly retracts them: thus a jet of water is produced which is prolonged by the gradual shutting of the valves, and clears the shell and the crypt.

There is another family of bivalves, which bores the rocks, the species of which are instructed by their Maker to accomplish their object by a very different process. I allude to Lamarck's family of *Stone-eaters*.* This family contains only two genera, removed from *Venus*, which he denominates *Saxicave*,† and *Petricole*,‡ the habits of which appear to be the same. M. Fleurian de Bellevue has described the proceedings of a species found in great numbers in submarine calcareous rocks near Rochelle. It lives like the pholads in crypts within the rock, but as the crypt is not circular, it is clear it cannot be produced by a revolution of the animal upon its foot; M. de Bellevue, therefore, concluded that it dissolved the stone by means of a phosphoric acid transuding from its body. Some have thought that, did the animal secrete such an acid, it must have destroyed its shell; but since the rock round the crypt is found to be differently coloured from the rest, for a little thickness, and the animal does not frequent the argillaceous, basaltic, and other rocks in the vicinity, but only the calcareous ones, M. Bellevue's opinion is rendered not improbable. It is surely very possible that the acid may be so mixed and tempered as to act upon the rock and not upon the shell. Mr. Osler, in the memoir lately quoted, brings forward some very powerful additional arguments which

* Les Lithophages.

† Saxicava.

‡ Petricola.