

Volutes,* Helmets,† Rockshells,‡ Strombs,§ and other conchs which exceed the general run of shells in beauty, form, and magnitude. But with regard to their habits and instincts we know little or nothing of any interest.

They are distinguished from the herbivorous ones by breathing the sea-water, for they are all submarine, by means of a siphon or tube, instead of by an aperture in the neck; in the place of maxillæ, their mouth is furnished with a retractile proboscis, with which they pierce and suck other shell-fish. The aperture of the shell is also very different, the siphon being accompanied sometimes by a channel, and sometimes by a notch at the base of the aperture.

The tribe most celebrated from ancient times, on account of the vaunted purple dye which one species produced, is that constituted by the *Rock-shells*, or Linné's great genus, *Murex*, and Lamarck's canaliferous Zoophagans, called so from the long straight canal which terminates the mouth of their shells. The principal feature of this tribe, besides their long channelled beak, is the vast variety of spines, and other processes and ridges, with which their Creator has armed a great number of them; the beak and mouth of several give them no small resemblance to the heads of certain birds, thus one is called the thorny woodcock,|| another the snipe,¶ &c.

At the first blush an inquirer into the use of these spines and other arms of shell-fish, would imagine that their object is defence, yet when he is told that those which are most remarkable for them are themselves predaceous animals, and that the herbivorous shell-fish are usually not distinguished by anything of the kind, he seems to hesitate as to what conclusion he shall draw. It may be observed, however, that the tribe most distinguished for these arms, the

* *Voluta*.

§ *Strombus*.

† *Cassis*.

|| *M. Tribulus*.

‡ *Murex*.

¶ *M. Haustellum*.