

the alligators in the West Indies, from the gnats and flies that stick, in great abundance, in the glutinous matter they contain.

But there is a terrestrial kind of leech found in the island of Ceylon, which appears to be a greater pest than any other species of the genus, and one of the greatest scourges of that fine island. They infest, in immense numbers, the mountains, woods, and swampy grounds, particularly in the rainy season. They are oftener seen on leaves and stones than in the waters. The largest are about half an inch long when at rest. Their colour varies from brown to light brown, with three longitudinal yellow lines. They are semi-transparent, and when fully extended are like a fine chord, sharp at the extremity, and easily thread any aperture, so that they can penetrate through the light clothing worn in that climate, rendering it impossible, at that season, to pass through the woods without being covered with blood, Dr. Davy counted fifty on the same person; no sooner does any individual stop, than, as if they saw or scented him, they crowd towards him from all quarters. From their immense numbers, activity, and thirst of blood, they are the great pest of travellers in the interior. Percival says that the Dutch, in their march into the interior, at different times, lost several of their men from their attack. Other animals besides man suffer dreadfully from them, and horses in particular are rendered so restive, when they fasten upon them, as to be quite unmanageable and unsafe to ride. The only way to prevent their attack, is to cover the skin completely.

The office devolved upon the present tribe is one which, within certain limits, is beneficial to the animals who are the objects of it,—though those last mentioned would be inserted in a list of the destroyers of the animal kingdom—which contribute to maintain a just balance between the different members of it. The fly that bites the horse pre-