

serving, that, in most of the *Decapod* Crustaceans, the anterior legs are become strictly *arms*, terminating in a kind of didactyle hand, consisting of a large joint, incrassated usually at the base, and furnished on its inner side with a smaller moveable one, constituting together a kind of finger and thumb, with which it is enabled to seize firmly and hold strongly any object that its inclinations or fears point out to it. This hand we call the *chela* or claw, or more properly pincers, of the lobster or crab. We find it also in the scorpion and book-crab,* which on shore are in some sort analogous to the long-tailed and short-tailed Crustaceans, or lobsters and crabs of the waters. This structure of the hand, in these creatures, is particularly fitted to their wants and situation. A hand like ours, consisting of a quadruple set of fingers and an opposite thumb, to be of sufficient power for their purposes, must be so disproportioned to their size, as to be an incumbrance rather than a useful instrument of prehension; but as now constructed, it has the requisite strength for the purposes of the animal, without being disproportioned to its size, and inconvenient for its use. Thus we see how nicely every thing is calculated and adjusted by Supreme Wisdom, to the nature and circumstances of every animal form.

But these great claws are by no means universal amongst the Crustaceans. In some the claws are very small, but the loss is often made up to these by an increase as to number, so that if they cannot lay hold of large animals, they can seize, at the same time, several small ones. We have seen that in the king-crab all the legs have these prehensory claws, and they vary in number in many of the smaller Crustaceans, as the shrimp,† prawn,‡ pandle,§ &c. The fore-leg of some of these has prehensory claws, that are

* Chelifer.

† Crangon vulgaris.

‡ Palæmon serratus.

§ Pandalus.