

They have the habit of holding up the great one, as if they were beckoning some one ; but this doubtless is an attitude of defence. These crabs live in moist places near the shore. They attack, in crowds, any carrion, and dispute the possession of it with the vultures ; they do not willingly enter the water, except when they lay and hatch their eggs, and it is conjectured that their young are for some time entirely aquatic. One kind of them,* which forms numerous burrows, remaining in them during three or four months in the winter, usually stops them up, so that the animals are obliged to re-open them when the warmth of the vernal sun bids them come forth again from their winter quarters. They are devoured by numerous animals,—otters, bears, birds, tortoises, and other reptiles, all prey upon them, but their multiplication is so excessive, that there seems no sensible diminution of their numbers.

The next tribe of Decapods are the *long-tailed ones*, which do not fold their abdomen under their body. This part is usually furnished at the extremity with several plates, which the animal expands so as to form a fan of five or six leaves ; they are easily seen in the common lobster ; † like the tail of birds, they are useful to the animal in its passage through an element that requires to be moved by organs of a firmer consistence than feathers. The lateral ones in the species just named, have a kind of articulation, so that they can be partially depressed, and push against the plane they are moving upon : they do not, like the crabs, quit the water ; and are some of them, as the cray-fish, ‡ fresh-water animals.

I shall begin with a tribe which, in some degree, connects the crab with the lobster ; these are what are denominated *Hermit-crabs* (*fig. 72*), whose abdomen being

* *G. Pugillator.*

† *Astacus Gammarus.*

‡ *Astacus fluviatilis.*