

similar places, observes that it spins a kind of web of different kinds of silk, the surface of which has a flocky appearance, from the web being as it were ravelled.

This web is produced, he observes, by a double series of spines, opposed to each other, and planted on a prominent ridge of the upper-side of the metatarsal joint, or that usually regarded as the first joint of the foot of the posterior legs, on the side next the abdomen. These spines are employed by the animal as a carding apparatus, the low series combing, as it were, or extracting, the ravelled web from the spinneret,* and the upper series, by the insertion of its spines between those of the other, disengaging the web from them.† By this curious operation, which it is not easy to describe clearly, the adhesive part of the snare is formed, thus large flies are easily caught and detained, which the animal, emerging from its concealment, soon despatches and devours.

The organs by which the *retiary* spiders form their curious geometric snares have generally been described as three claws, the two uppermost armed with parallel teeth like a comb, and the lower one simple and often depressed; but Mr. Blackwall found, in a species related to the common garden spider,‡ *eight* claws, seven of which had their lower side toothed.§ The object of this complex apparatus of claws, simple and pectinated, is to enable these animals to take hold of any thread; to guide it, to pull it, to draw it out; to ascertain the nature of anything ensnared, whether it be animate or inanimate; and to suspend itself. In fact, the Creator has made their claws not only hands but eyes to these animals.

Besides these organs, scattered moveable spines or spurs

* Mammulæ.

† Blackwall, ubi sup. 473.

‡ *Epeira Diadema*. The species examined by Mr. B. was *E. apoclisia*.

§ Blackwall, ubi sup. 476.