

as to be troublesome to us, and cover the earth. M. Mendo Trigozo\* relates, that at Lisbon, on the 6th of November, 1811, the Tagus was covered, for more than half an hour, by these webs, and that innumerable spiders accompanied them which swam on the surface of the water. I have in another place† given an account of the instruments by which they weave them; and shall now say a few words upon those by which their Creator has enabled them to produce the material of which they are formed.

At the posterior extremity of the abdomen, formed usually by a prominence, is the anus, immediately below which, planted in a roundish depressed space, are four or six jointed teat-like organs, of a rather conical or cylindrical shape. The exterior pair is the longest, consisting of three joints; but these have no orifices at their extremity for the transmission of threads: the other four‡ consist each of two joints, and are pierced at their extremity with innumerable little orifices, in some species amounting to a thousand from each, from which their web issues at their will, or bristled with an army of infinitely minute biarticulate spinnerets,§ each furnishing a thread at their extremity. These teats are connected with internal reservoirs, which yield the fluid matter forming the thread or web. These reservoirs in some species consist of *four*, and in others of *six* vessels folded several times, and communicating with other vessels in which the material that forms their web is first elaborated.||

Such are the organs which furnish the material of those wonderful and diversified toils which the spiders weave to entrap the animals that form their food.

The threads, after they issue from these organs, are

\* Latr. Cours. D'Ent. i. 497.

† See above, p. 135.

‡ Mammulæ, Introd. to Ent. iii. 391.

§ Fusi, *ibid.* 392.

|| Latr. Cours D'Ent. i. 496.