

always, entirely under water ; but its inhabitant has filled it with air for her respiration, which enables her to live in it. She conveys the air to it in the following manner ; she usually swims upon her back, when her abdomen is enveloped in a bubble of air, and appears like a globe of quicksilver ; with this she enters her cocoon, and, displacing an equal mass of water, again ascends for a second lading, till she has sufficiently filled her house with it, so as to expel all the water. The males construct similar habitations, by the same manœuvres. How these little animals can envelope their abdomen with an air-bubble, and retain it till they enter their cells, is still one of Nature's mysteries that have not been explained. We cannot help, however, admiring and adoring the Wisdom, Power, and Goodness manifested in this singular provision, enabling an animal that breathes the atmospheric air to fill her house with it under the water, and which has instructed her in a secret art, by which she can clothe part of her body with air, as with a garment, which she can put off when it answers her purpose. This is a kind of attraction and repulsion that mocks all our inquiries.

Amongst the spiders called the *hunters*, and the *vagrants*, some seize their prey like the lion or the tiger, with the aid of few or no toils, by jumping upon them, when they come within their reach. I have often observed a white or yellowish species of crab-spider*—a tribe so called because their motions resemble those of crabs—which lies in wait for her prey in the blossoms of umbelliferous and other white-blossomed plants, and can scarcely be distinguished from them, which, when a fly or other insect alights upon the flower, darts upon it before she is perceived.

There is a very common black and white spider,† amongst the *vagrants*, which may always be seen in summer, on

* Related probably to *Thomisus citreus*.

† *Salticus scenicus*.