

aquatic animals. We know, by experience, that a large portion of them are of the greatest benefit to mankind, and the rest, from the gigantic shark to the pigmy minnow, each in their place, and engaged in the fulfilment of their several functions, are, we may conclude, equally beneficial, though in a way that we cannot fully appreciate.

I have had more than one occasion to enlarge upon some of those parts of the history of fishes with which we are acquainted,* I shall therefore only add here some particulars with respect to the habits of a few individuals which may throw some light upon their history.

Amongst the Cyclostomous Cartilagineans the *hag* is distinguished by a singular means of escape from its enemies. This animal adheres to fishes by creating a vacuum by means of its lips; this effected, it lacerates them with its teeth, without their being able to shake it off, and then, like the leech, it sucks their blood and juices; but since, when thus fixed and employed, it might easily become the prey of other fishes, Providence has enabled it to conceal itself from them, by means of the excrement which, when in danger, it emits, and which remains for a time near it, detained by the slime which exudes from its pores. This is so abundant that Kalm, having put one in a large tub of sea-water, it became like a clear transparent glue, from which he could draw threads, even moving the animal with them. A second water, upon its being again immersed, in a quarter of an hour, became the same. Sir E. Home was of opinion that these animals are hermaphrodites.

Amongst all the diversified faculties, powers, and organs, with which Supreme Wisdom has gifted the members of the animal kingdom to defend themselves from their enemies, or to secure for themselves a due supply of food, none are

* Vol. i. 131—144.