

they seem to have occasion for additional rowing organs. One traveller, D. Pagès, says that they also sometimes use their wings as fore-legs, walking on all fours.\* Some of them burrow like rabbits, but how they effect this has not been ascertained. In general they are reckoned as the most stupid and foolish animals in the whole Class; in fact most of the web-footed birds exhibit less of the life and spirit and gaiety that distinguish so conspicuously those whose principal theatre of motion is the air: belonging, as they do, to two elements, they may be regarded, in some sense, as half fowl and half fish; and when we call a man, not remarkable for sense, a *goose*, we admit some such degradation in aquatic birds.

But all sea-birds are not of this character; amongst these the *frigate-bird*† and the *albatross*‡ are most conspicuous, emulating the eagle and the vulture amongst the terrestrial birds of prey. Of all the oceanic birds, the frigate-bird comes nearest to the *eagle*. Its keen sight, its crooked beak, its short, robust, and plumy legs, its sharp claws, the vast extent of its wings, and its rapid flight, all show that it is the oceanic representative of the king of birds. If the peaceful flying-fish seeks a refuge from the dorados§ and bonitos,|| its aquatic enemies, by elevating itself from the water into the air, the frigate-bird darts upon it like a thunder-bolt and devours it. If the booby¶ has caught a fish, like the bald eagle\*\* the frigate-bird often compels it to let go its prey, and seizes it before it reaches the water. Its extent of flight is wonderful, and exceeds that of any other marine bird; for it possesses between the tropics a domain of more than four hundred leagues, over which it directs its

\* N. D. D'H. N. xiii. 306.

† *Diomedea exulans*.

|| *Scomber Pelamis*.

\*\* Richardson, Fn. Boreal. Americ. ii. 15. Audubon. Biogr. 162.

† *Tachypetes Aquila*.

§ *Coryphæna hippurus*.

¶ *Sula Bassana*.