

which has contributed to throw great light on the natural history of polypiferous animals.* While observing some aquatic plants, which he had collected and put into water, his attention was called to the appearance of filaments adhering to them, which he at first conceived to be parasitic vegetables: but farther observation convinced him that they were endowed with powers of spontaneous motion, and that they preyed upon small insects: and he, therefore, could no longer doubt their animal nature. He found that they always placed themselves on the side of the glass next to the light; and by watching their changes of position, he discovered the mode in which they effect their progressive motions. If the hydra be standing in the erect position, its foot being applied to the bottom of the glass (Fig. 73,) it slowly bends the body in the direction in which it intends to advance till its head touches the vessel, as shown in Fig. 74. It then adheres to the surface by the mouth, or by one or two of its tentacula, and, detaching the foot, bends the body into a curve, at the same time slightly retracting it, so that the foot is brought near the head (Fig. 75.) The foot is then again fixed, preparatory to a new step, which it takes by detaching the head and projecting it forwards as before (Fig. 76.)



The progress made by these successive efforts is but slow: for the hydra often pauses in the middle of a step, as if deliberating whether it should proceed: so that the traversing a distance of seven or eight inches is to these animals a very good day's journey, even in summer. But a mode of travelling rather more expeditious than this is occasionally resorted to. It consists of a succession of somersets: the hy-

* Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire d'un genre de Polypes d'eau douce, à bras en forme de cornes. Par A. Trembley, 1744.