

seen playing about them; and after some time she conducts them in triumph back to the ocean, at least such as have sufficient strength for that purpose; the remainder continue in the fresh water until they die, or are caught; but their flavour never equals that of such of them as have undergone a sea-voyage.

The existence of the lamprey is of very short duration:—after casting her eggs, she becomes flabby and exhausted, appears prematurely old, and two years generally put a termination to her natural life.

That the lamprey was the name* of a fish in high esteem among the ancients, is a circumstance pretty generally known; as well as that there is a species of the lamprey served up as one of the greatest dainties among the modern Romans: whether *theirs* be the *murena* of the ancients, is not easily to be ascertained; but that *our* lamprey is not, needs no argument to prove. The lamprey of the Italians agrees with the ancient fish, in being kept in ponds,
and

* Gesner and Aldrovandus think that the Latin word *lampetra* comes from *alabis*, which, in Greek, signifies a smooth, slippery body, that escapes from the hand, whence proceeds the word *alabastrum*, signifying the most polished marble. There are nine different species of this fish.