

hardens by degrees. Lobsters only grow in size while their shells are in their soft state. They are chosen for the table, by their being heavy in proportion to their size ; and by the hardness of their shells on their sides, which, when in perfection, will not yield to moderate pressure. Barnacles and other small fish adhering to them, are reckoned certain signs of superior goodness. Cock-lobsters are in general better than the hens in winter ; they are distinguished by the narrowness of their nails, and by their having a strong spine upon the centre of each of the transverse processes beneath the tail, which support the four middle plates of their tails. The flesh of a lobster's claw is more tender, delicate, and easy of digestion, than that of the tail. In summer, the lobsters are found near the shore, and thence to about six fathom water ; in winter they are seldom taken in less than 12 or 15 fathoms. Like most insects, they are much more active and alert in warm weather than in cold. In the water they can rush nimbly upon their legs or small claws ; and, if alarmed, can spring, tail foremost, to a surprising distance, as swift as a bird can fly. The fishermen can see them pass about 30 feet ; and, by the swiftness of their motion, suppose they may go  
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