

of the rivers and seas ; for when these are out of the water, the branchiæ very soon grow crisp and dry, the blood-vessels are shrunk, and the blood is obstructed in its passage ; so, when the former are immersed in water, or otherwise prevented from having respiration, the circulation ceases, and the animal dies.

Again, as land-animals would be destroyed by too much maceration in water ; so fishes would, on the other hand, be ruined by too much exsiccation ; the latter being, from their general structure and constitution, made fit to bear, and live in the water ; the former, by their constitution and form, to breathe and dwell in the air.

But it may be asked, why eels and water-snakes are capable of living longer in the air than the other kinds of fish ? This is answered by considering the providential care of the great Creator for these and every one of his creatures : for since they were capable of locomotion by their form, which they need not be if they were never to go on shore, it seemed necessary that they should be rendered capable of living a considerable time on shore, otherwise their locomotion would be in vain.—How is this provided for ? Why, in a most convenient