

considerable portion of their nutriment from them, the minute Crustaceans probably do the same, and many insects, whose larvæ inhabit the waters, some by producing a vortex like the rotatories,\* thus find an abundant supply to carry them to their intermediate state. But not only do these creatures furnish the more minute animals that inhabit the waters, with a considerable portion of their food, but, it should seem, even some of those that are of a higher grade, and larger stature. Whoever has been in the habit of keeping gold and silver fish,† in glass or other vessels, is aware that they require no other food than a fresh supply of water every second or third day. Their nutriment therefore must be derived from what they find in the water. In this may often be seen minute Branchiopods swimming here and there, sometimes with a bundle of eggs appended to each side: but these are not sufficiently numerous to form the whole of their food; the water must therefore contain other nutritive substances which may contribute to their subsistence, and as it is known that various infusory animalcules inhabit it, we may conclude that they are inserted in their bill of fare. It has been observed by an eminent writer, speaking of the gold fish: "The water, when care is taken to renew it frequently, appears sufficient for the nutriment of these fishes during many months; but it should be considered that though this water appears to us very pure, it always contains a multitude of animalcules and very minute plants, which the fishes are continually swallowing."

When Creative Wisdom covered the earth with plants, and peopled it with animals, he laid the foundations of the vegetable and animal kingdoms with such as were most easily convertible into nutriment for the tribes immediately above them. The first plants and the first animals are

\* *Culex*, *Stratyomis*, &c.

† *Cyprinus auratus*.