

devour the leaves and stems of plants, but some also attack their *roots*; one species, defended by an operculum or mouth-cover, devours those of the violet.* Others of this tribe are found on trees, under moss, or feeding on the lichens; the shells of some of these are what are called turrited,† or long and slender, with spiral whirls, resembling, in miniature, a lofty tower with a spiral staircase winding round it. By this attenuated structure their motions, in their close retreats, are less impeded. As it is in this tribe of univalves that the organ just mentioned, the *operculum*, or mouth-piece, first makes its appearance, it will not be improper here to give some account of it.

If we survey the various tribes of shell-bearing animals we find them defended from the injuries or attacks, to which their situation exposes them, by various expedients, all of them indicating Power and Wisdom in their contrivance and formation, and Goodness in their end. These animals themselves all have a soft body furnished with organs of different kinds, suited to their station and purposes. Those that are below them in the scale, especially the naked Polypes, and gelatinous Radiaries, are still more frail and evanescent, but their organization is so inferior, that it is probably less subject to derangement from external accidents, or injuries are sooner remedied, than in that of the shell-fish—which, unless they were clad in some kind of mail, would probably soon perish. Accordingly we find some protected by a multivalve tubular shell,‡ the inhabitant protruding its organs at the summit, which is defended by an operculum consisting of more than a single piece—in others, also, the shell is multivalve, but the animal protrudes itself at the sides, and has no operculum, as in the common barnacle.§ Others, again, are protected by a shell consisting of two valves, open at one or two

* *Cyclostoma elegans*.

† *Clausilia*.

‡ *Balanus Tubicinella*.

§ *Pentelasmis*.