are not found vaſt numbers of theſe ſhells with the fiſh living in them. All theſe ſhells are ſmall, and they are of very little beauty, being uſually of a plain greyiſh or browniſh colour. Our ditches afford us chamse, buccina, neritae, and ſome patellæ ; but the Nile, and ſome other rivers, furniſhed the ancients with a ſpecies of tellina which was large and eatable, and ſo much ſuperior to the common ſea tellina in flavour, that it is commonly known by the name of *tellina regia,*

“ the royal tellina.” We have a ſmall ſpecies of buccinum common in our freſh waters, which is very ele­gant, and always has its operculum in the manner of the larger buccina ; a ſmall kind of muſcle is alſo very common, which is ſo extremely thin and tender, that it can hardly be handled without breaking to pieces. The large freſh water muſcle, commonly called in England the *horſe-muſcle,* is too well known to need a deſcription; and the ſize ſufficiently diſtinguiſhes it from all other freſh water ſhells.

In collecting shells, it is most adviſable, whenever it can be done, to get thoſe which have in them the li­ving animals ; becauſe we ſhall thus obtain the natural hiſtory of the animals, and the ſhells themſelves in their natural beauty, and the full glow of their colours. Shells ſhould be alſo procured from the deeper parts of their resorts, and immediately after storms on the ſea beaches and ſhores; becauſe, by being much expoſed to the ſun, their colours fade, and they are liable to other accidents that injure them. In order to kill the fiſh that inhabits them, Mr Da Coſta advises to give them a quick dip in boiling water, and when they are cooled, to lay them in cold water till they are cleaned ; and in this operation they ſhould not be touched with aquafortis, or any other acid, nor expoſed to the heat of the fire and ſun.

The art of poliſhing shells arrived but lately at its preſent ſtate of perfection ; and as the love of ſea-ſhells is become ſo common among us, it may not be diſagreeable to the reader to find ſome inſtructions in executing ſo pleaſing a method of adding to their natural beauty, the rules for which are at preſent ſo little known, though the effect of them be ſo much eſteemed.

Among the immenſe variety of ſhells which we are acquainted with, ſome are taken up out of the ſea, or found on its ſhores in all their perfection and beauty ; their colours being all ſpread by nature upon the ſurface, and their natural poliſh ſuperior to any thing that art could give. Where nature is in herſelf thus perfect, it were madneſs to attempt to add any thing to her charms : but in others, where the beauties are latent and covered with a coarſer outer ſkin, art is ſo be called in ; and the outer veil being taken off, all the internal beauties appear.

Among the ſhells which are found naturally poliſhed are the porcelains, or cowries ; the cassanders ; the do­lia, or conchæ globosæ, or tuns ; ſome buccina, the vo­lutes, and the cylinders, or olives, or, as they are gene­rally though improperly called, the *rhombi ;* excepting only two or three, as the tiara, the plumb, and the butter-tub rhombus, where there is an unpromiſing film on the ſurface, hiding a very great ſhare of beauty with­in. Though the generality of the ſhells of theſe genera are taken out of the ſea in all their beauty, and in their utmoſt natural poliſh, there are ſeveral other genera, in which all or moſt of the ſpecies are taken up naturally rough and foul, and covered with an epidermis, or coarſe

outer ſkin, which is in many rough and downy or hairy. The tellinæ, the muſcles, the cochleæ, and many others, are of this kind. The more nice collectors, as naturaliſts, insist upon having all their ſhells in their native and genuine appearance, as they are found when living at ſea; but the ladies, who make collections, hate the diſagreeable outſides, and will have all ſuch poliſhed.

It would be very adviſable, however, for both kinds of collectors to have the same ſhells in different ſpecimens both rough and poliſhed : the naturaliſt would by this means, beſides knowing the outſide of the ſhell, be better acquainted with its internal characters than he otherwiſe could be, and the lady would have a pleaſure in comparing the beauties of the ſhell, in its wrought ſtate, to its coarſe appearance as nature gives it. How many elegancies in this part of the creation must be wholly lost to us, if it were not for the aſſiſtance of an art of this kind ! Many ſhells in their native ſtate are like rough diamonds ; and we can form no just idea of their beauties till they have been poliſhed and wrought into form.

Though the art of poliſhing ſhells is a very valuable one, yet it is very dangerous to the ſhells ; for without the utmoſt care, the means uſed to poliſh and beautify a ſhell often wholly deſtroy it. When a ſhell is to be poliſhed, the firſt thing to be examined is whether it have naturally a ſmooth ſurface, or be covered with tu­bercles or prominences.

A ſhell which has a ſmooth ſurſace, and a natural dull poliſh, need only be rubbed with the hand, or with a piece of chamoy leather, with ſome tripoli, or fine rotten ſtone, and will become of a perfectly bright and fine poliſh. Emery is not to be uſed on this occaſion,. becauſe it wears away too much of the ſhell. This operation requires the hand of an experienced perſon, that knows how ſuperficial the work muſt be, and where he is to flop ; for in many of theſe ſhells the lines are only on the ſurface, and the wearing away ever ſo little of the ſhell defaces them. A ſhell that is rough, foul, and cruſty, or covered with a tartareous coat, muſt be left a whole day ſteeping in hot water: when it has im­bibed a large quantity of this, it is to be rubbed with rough emery on a ſtick, or with the blade of a knife, in order to get off the coat. After this, it may be dipped in diluted aquafortis, ſpirit of ſalt, or any other acid; and after remaining a few moments in it, be again plunged into common water. This will add greatly to the ſpeed of the work. After this it is to be well rubbed with linen cloths, impregnated with common ſoap ; and when by theſe ſeveral means it is made perfectly clean, the poliſhing is to be finished with fine emery and a hair-bruſh. If aber this the ſhell when dry appears not to have ſo good a poliſh as was desired, it muſt be rubbed over with a ſolution of gum arabic ; and this will add greatly to its gloſs, without doing it the ſmalleſt injury. The gum-water muſt not be too thick, and then it gives no ſenſible coat, only heighten­ing the colours. The white of an egg anſwers this purpoſe alſo very well ; but it is ſubject to turn yellow. If the ſhell has an epidermis, which will by no means admit the poliſhing of it, it is to be dipped ſeveral times in diluted aquafortis, that this may be eaten off ; and then the ſhell is to be poliſhed in the uſual way with putty, fine emery, or tripoli, on the hair of a fine bruſh. When it is only a pellicle that hides the colours, the ſhells muſt be ſteeped in hot water, and after that the