

## ELECTRIC FISHES.

There are three kinds of fishes, unrelated to each other, which possess electric functions: that is, they are capable of giving electric shocks. They are the Torpedoes, or Electric Rays; the Electric Eel; and the Sheath-fishes, or Electric Cat-fishes. There are others, the names of which need not be mentioned, which possess elementary or pseudo-electric organs. The electric muscular substance is differently adjusted in the three kinds enumerated. In the Torpedoes the batteries lie on either side of the head; in the Electric Eel they are longitudinal bodies in two pairs, immediately below the skin; and in the Sheath-fishes they extend all over the body, being thickest on the abdomen.

I had once an opportunity to test the powers to give electric shocks which two of these three kinds of fishes possess. Being invited by the keeper of the aquarium of the Zoological Gardens in London to receive a shock from an Electric Eel, I placed my hands upon the fish and received it, but it was slight, a circumstance probably due to the fact that the eel was not at home in its changed environment. Shortly afterwards Dr. Forbes, who kindly escorted me through the aquarium of the Liverpool Public Museum asked if I would like a shock from an electric cat-fish. I remembered the slight shock which the eel had given, and therefore readily placed my hands on the side of the fish, but the shock it gave was so violent that I would not again care to repeat the experiment.

## FISHES WHICH TAKE CARE OF THEIR PROGENY.

The vast majority of fishes, of which there are some 13,000 known species, take no care whatsoever of their progeny. The eggs are deposited, and then immediately fecundated, and the parents never see their young, unless they should afterwards encounter them, as they might other fishes, and perhaps devour them. A comparatively few, however, do take care of their young. In some such as the black bass and certain cat-fishes both parents do. In a few only the female does. The females of the cat-fishes of the genus *Aspredo*, of Guyana, press the eggs into a spongy