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MICROSCOPIC WONDERS.

First catch your fly! This feat was accomplished by the professor with a sort of graceful dexterity that would have reflected credit upon any 10-year-old urchin who ever crooned out his wearisome tasks during a long summer's afternoon in a country schoolhouse—accompanied, however, by a solemn earnestness of pursuit which forbade all unseemly levity. The little captive was adjudged sufficiently adequate for scientific development, having, as the professor observed, a guilty look, although wherefore was not demonstrated, and he was forthwith condemned to decapitation. This ceremony was performed by placing him under a small microscope, and a deft, sharp instrument quickly severed his devoted head from the trunk, as neatly as ever the guillotine of sunny France ever cut short the career of an obnoxious loyalist. The head was then placed under a more powerful instrument, which revealed its grand proportions to the unpracticed eye. It was a nobby head, evidently belonging to one of the more cultured class of flies, in spite of first impressions. It must be confessed, however, that it ran considerably to eyeball—eyes large enough in proportion to the rest of the structure to satisfy the most ardent poet, although not vivid or dreamy, being, on the contrary, very dull and of a reddish brown color. The expression, if they ever had any, was gone, and nothing but a stony, martyr-like gaze remained. After this examination, another successful operation was performed, and the head was split open, revealing its curious and complicated structure; after which the tongue of the insect was carefully extracted, the *modus operandi* being the application of a light pressure above the organ, causing it to protrude its full length, when it was skillfully removed, care being taken not to mutilate it. Under the microscope the proboscis bore a decided resemblance to a rough, uneven log, overgrown with dark, thick moss, at one end of which were a number of black projections having the appearance of heavy spikes driven into the log, but which were in reality infinitely small hairs. It was certainly a formidable looking object in its magnified state. The experienced eye of the professor detected a slight vibration upon the surface of the log, and that particular specimen of fly-tongue was pronounced one of those for which we sought. The tongue was inhibited; and again the fly proved a success. The operation which followed was one of extreme caution and painful manipulation, and consisted in splitting the organ lengthwise, which was successfully accomplished under the small microscope, with instruments of most delicate texture requiring the greatest care in their use. The operation resulted favorably, and sure enough the "eritter" was there. He had taken up his residence for the time being inside the tongue, although it has been demonstrated that he possesses the power of roaming at his own sweet will either inside or outside of his field of operation. He was captured without much of a contest, and was imprisoned in a small drop of water, which was placed upon a glass slide with a concave centre, and subjected to the searching revelations of the microscope. He appeared to take naturally to his new element, and manifested a surprising activity in his liquid quarters. He was pronounced by the professor to be a very handsome specimen. He was almost transparent, had a flat head, and the body of a serpent. And how he did squirm, filling the entire space of his miniature aquarium with his writhings and convulsions. By actual measurement, this one was found by Mr. Mickelborough to be 73-1000 of an inch in diameter. The greatest number he has ever found on a single fly's tongue was three—enough, in all conscience!—*Cincinnati Commercial.*

The By-Production of Coal Burning.

In using raw coal for heating purposes these valuable products are not only absolutely lost to us, but in the atmosphere too well known to the denizens of London and other large towns as smoke. Professor Roberts has calculated that the soot in the pall hanging over London on a winter's day amounts to fifty tons, and that the carbonic oxide, a poisonous compound, resulting from the imperfect combustion of coal, may be taken as at least five times that amount. Mr. Aiken has shown, moreover, in an interesting paper communicated to the Royal Society of Edinburgh last year, that the fine dust resulting from the imperfect combustion of coal is mainly instrumental in the formation of fog; each particle of solid matter attracting to itself aqueous vapor; these globules of fog are rendered particularly tenacious and disagreeable by the presence of tar-vapor, another result of imperfect combustion of raw fuel, which might be turned to much better account at the dye-works. The hurtful influence of smoke upon public health, the great personal discomfort to which it gives rise, and the vast expense it indirectly causes through the destruction of our monuments, furniture, and apparel, are now being recognized, as is evinced by the success of recent smoke abatement exhibitions. The most effectual remedy would result from a general recognition of the fact that, wherever smoke is produced, fuel is being consumed wastefully, and that all our calorific effects, from the

largest down to the domestic fire, can be realized as completely and more economically, without allowing any of the fuel employed to reach the atmosphere unburnt. This most desirable result may be effected by the use of gas for all heating purposes, with or without the addition of coke or anthracite.—*Popular Science Monthly, December.*

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