

instituendo dissectiones, catellarum imprimis valde juvenum, &c. ad rei certitudinem majorem.

Seaventhly, from Germany we are inform'd, that in the University of Jena in Upper Saxony, one Mr. Weighelins, Professor of the Mathematicks there, hath invented several ingenious Instruments and Engins; As first, an Astronomical one, which he calls *Astrodicticum*, by the means whereof very many persons shall be able at one and the same time to behold one and the same Star. Secondly, An exceeding great *Globe* of the *World*, capable of ten persons to sit in it all at once, and to behold the motions of the celestial Bodies, &c. Thirdly, An *odd Bridge*, or a kind of Stairs, by which a man shall descend and yet really be raised upward, and going as 'twere upon a plain shall, from a lower, by gently subsiding, arrive to an upper story, &c. Of these and other particulars, said to be in part already done, and in part design'd by the said Mathematician, we hope we shall in time obtain a more satisfactory account.

The Extract of a Letter written by Mr. John Ray to the Publisher from Middleton, July 3. 1671. concerning Spontaneous Generation; As also some Insects smelling of Musk.

Sir,

AS to the particulars contain'd in your Letter, I well remember, that Mr. Lister did, a good while since, write me his opinion concerning *Vegetable Excrescencies*, and the Insects therein bred and harboured; but the Letter containing that Discourse I have not at present by me, it being sent away in a bundle of other Letters and papers into Essex. I have therefore written to him to desire him, to take the pains himself to send you his thoughts upon that subject. *

* The Reader is like to find this Account in the Transactions of the next Month.

Whether there be any *Spontaneous* or *Anomalous Generation* of Animals, as hath been the constant opinion of Naturalists heretofore, I think there is good reason to question. It seems to me at present most probable, that there

there is no such thing ; but that even all Insects are the natural issue of parents of the same *species* with themselves. *F. Redi* hath gone a good way in proving this, having

* Of this Author an Account was given in *Numb.* 66. p. 2436.

cleared the point concerning generation *ex materia putrida*. * But still there remain two great difficulties.

The *first* is, to give an account of the production of Insects bred in the By-fruits and Excrescencies of Vegetables, which the said *Redi* doubts not to ascribe to the Vegetative Soul of the Plant that yields those Excrescencies. But for this I refer you to Mr. *Lister*. The *second*, to render an account of Insects bred in the Bodies of other animals. I hope shortly to be able to give you an account of the Generation of some of those Insects, which have been thought to be *spontaneous*, and vvhich seem as unlikely as any to be after the Ordinary and Usual vway.

Of such an Insect, as you mention, feeding upon *Ranunculus*, vvhich vvhhen dried yields a Musky scent, I have no knowledge. I can at present call to mind but two sorts of Insects that I have seen, which smel of Musk. The *one* is like the common *Capricornus* or *Goat-chaffer*, which is mention'd by all Naturalists that vvvrite of Insects, and vvhich smels so strong of that perfume, that you may scent it at a good distance as it flies by, or sits near you. The *other* is a small sort of *Bee*, vvhich in the South and East-parts of *England* is frequently to be met withal in Gardens among flowers in Spring-time. I remember, they vvvere very plentiful in Sir *Edw. Duke's Tulip-Garden*, vvhhen the Tulips flowred. Sir *Edward* is now dead; his house was not far from *Saxmundham* in *Suffolk*; the name of the Parish I have forgot.

I have by me the Description and Anatomy of a *Porpeps* (vvhich fish I happily met vvithal at *West Chester*) in vvhich there are some particulars, that I find not in the Descriptions of *Rondeletius* or others, which, if you please, I shall

* When this shall come to hand, we intend to communicate it to the Curious, the ingenious Author permitting it.

send you *. I rest, &c.

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