

suitable for pudding, and the thickness of the puddle must depend upon the proportion of clay used for it. M. S. B.

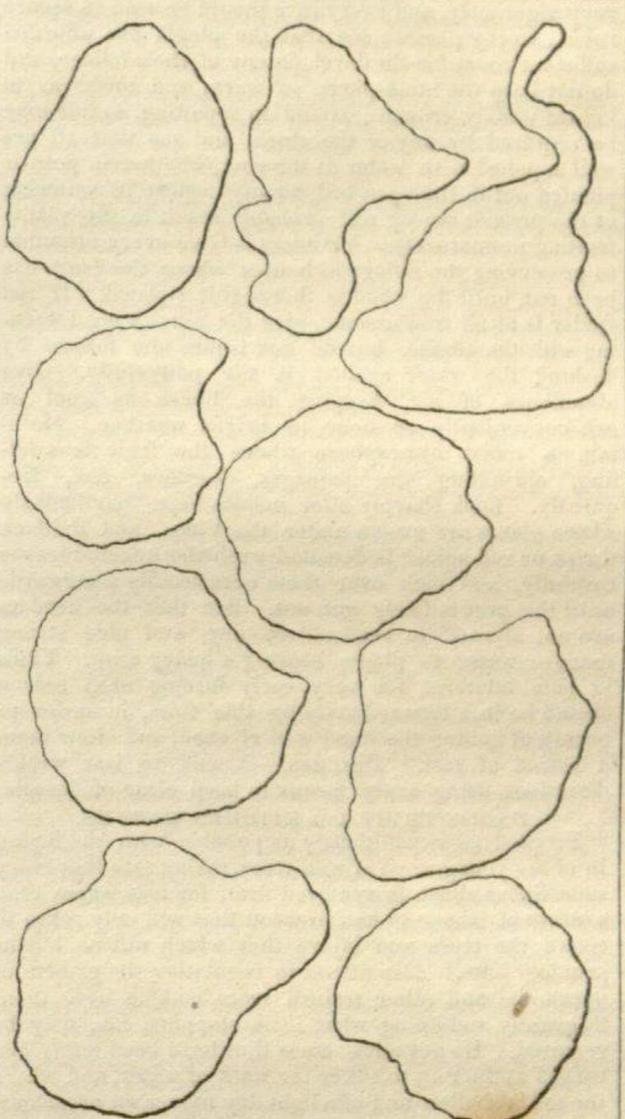
*Gardeners' Royal Benevolent Institution.*—Like your correspondent of last week, I have always felt that those who have the first claim on the voters of this charity are persons who have assisted others; for such I have always voted until this election, and I think that every one must feel that the 11th applicant, being totally blind, had certainly a prior claim: for, with him, hope long deferred must have been sadly felt. This was the motive that induced me to vote for one who had not subscribed to the charity. The number of votes he got at the previous election (viz., 348) showed that his claim was acknowledged. I think also that the 9th applicant was a very fair election, as he had subscribed four years, and had been trying nine (times?) years to get the annuity—a long time to wait when in want. So far, I must say, little fault is to be found; for place ourselves in the situations of the applicants in question, and we would soon find what a wearisome thing disappointment is at their time of life—year after year having their hopes raised and then depressed. I am really glad that they are elected. We now come from the 11th and 9th to the 5th application, and here I fear that the complaint of your correspondent has some grounds; for on looking to my polling-paper for the prior election, I find that the 5th application only numbers 51 and 46 votes, and that a second application of one who had never subscribed to the charity numbers 153 votes. Now, this does not look well; for if we go back to the 4th application we find George Kidd, who has subscribed nine years, only five votes ahead. From this it would appear that what your correspondent complains of is but too true. Had Ann Arnold, whose husband had subscribed eight years, numbered these votes, instead of Thomas Blair, it would have looked better and done more credit to the justice of voters. I do not think that the claim of having subscribed to the charity is sufficiently acknowledged, neither do I consider it fair that there should be any soliciting votes except from the parties themselves. Some lady very kindly interested herself for John Kent, but with what success I am uninformed; with me the prior claim of others made it imperative to refuse even a lady. I often find it difficult to please myself in voting. This time and for the first time I voted, as I have already stated, for one who had not subscribed to the charity, because I really looked upon J. Appleby, being totally blind, and first on the list after 11 applications, to be a very proper object of charity. My next vote was for J. Blacke, whose years (80) induced me to give him support, which however he cannot, in the course of nature, long enjoy. My other vote was for Geo. Kidd, a subscriber of nine years, and I am certainly at a loss to know upon what ground he could have failed, except upon the one of which your correspondent complains, and which I fear is exercising an injurious influence on voters. Now these things are not right, and I am surprised that a class of men (who are mostly considered thinking men) should allow them to exist. I think it ought to be a rule with all subscribers to the charity, first to help those who have endeavoured to assist others, and when all their claims are satisfied others should take priority according to age, afflictions, or number of applications. Let us hope that henceforth all matters connected with so excellent a charity as that under notice may be carried out with fairness to all concerned. G. Bond Walcot, Gardener, Salop.

*Nectar-secreting Organs of Plants.*—In the account compiled by Gärtner ("Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Befruchtung," p. 75, 1844) of the various organs in plants from which nectar is secreted, no mention is made of the stipule of the leaves of the common Vetch and Bean. On two occasions I have observed hive bees by the thousands industriously visiting the little dark (but sometimes colourless) glands on the under side of the stipule of the Vetch. On a hot day, on each gland a minute drop of nectar may be seen almost with the naked eye, and which is sometimes so large as to be just perceptibly sweet. I have seen the hive and another species of bee, a moth, ants, and two kinds of flies, sucking these drops. The hive bee never once even looked at the flowers, but attended solely to the stipule; whereas, at the very same time, two kinds of humble bee were sucking the flowers, and never visited the stipule. I noticed the hive bees on three successive hot days thus employed; but on the overcast morning of the 12th, after the previous very rainy day, not one was to be seen at mid-day, but numbers of humble bees were sucking the flowers: at 4 o'clock P.M., however, after some hot sunshine, a little glittering drop of nectar studded every gland, and the hive bees, by their mysterious means, had found it out, and were swarming all over the field. The fact of nectar being secreted by an organ quite distinct from the flower (though known in other cases) seems to me of some little interest, as showing that those botanists cannot be correct who believe that nectar is a special secretion for the purpose of tempting insects to visit flowers, and thus aid in their fertilisation. No one probably who has attended to this subject will dispute that insects in very many cases do thus aid the act of fertilisation; but we must, I think, look at the nectar as an excretion which is only incidentally (as is so often done by nature) made use of for a further but most important object. C. Darwin, Down, Farnborough, Kent.

*Sir Harry Strawberry.*—The following is an extract from a letter which I have received from a gentleman

residing in France, relative to this Strawberry:—"Aux Sablons near Morêt-sur-Loing. Seine Marne, July 4th, 1855.—I have much satisfaction in announcing the result of my crop of Sir Harry. I must confess that I have never eaten anything so delicious, and I assure you that you did not speak too highly of the qualities of this beautiful fruit, which in reality is far superior to any other known, and consequently cannot fail to find its way into the garden of every true amateur. The plants which I kept under glass proved that Sir Harry is equally well adapted for forcing; it even seemed to me that its fruit had a better flavour than those grown afterwards in the open air. Several of my friends having seen the Sir Harry, and the lithograph of the same, desire to possess it. Frederick Gloede."—Richard Underhill, Sir Harry's Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. [Remember that this is said of a Strawberry grown in a southern and better climate.]

*Hailstones.*—The following are tracings of hailstones made a few minutes after they had fallen, but not until the storm had passed, and therefore not until they had begun to dissolve. They represent the true sizes of the stones at the moment of tracing them, and something of their extraordinary shapes, to which, however, no representation can do justice. The majority of the large stones were most grotesque in form; all were very hard and very cold, a few sufficing to make the hand ache immediately they were collected therein. Some of the



larger stones were round and white in colour, but the greater number were clear as crystal. The storm came on very suddenly, about six A.M. last Saturday, after continued thunder in the early part of the morning, and some rain. It passed here from over the adjoining hills, almost direct south to north, and did not, I think, extend above two miles laterally. The stones represented were picked up in a space about a dozen yards square, in a temporary yard and shelter in the park for cows, where I had taken refuge. With the large stones descended ordinary hail and rain, but pieces like those figured formed the remarkable feature of the storm. Need I add that glass and vegetation within their reach suffered severely? J. Taylor, Aston Clinton, Bucks, July 16.

Societies.

ENTOMOLOGICAL, July 2.—J. Curtis, Esq., F.L.S., President, in the chair. Amongst the donations to the library and collection, announced as having been received since the last meeting, was a collection of 94 British species of spiders (in addition to 60 species previously presented), and 13 species of harvest spiders, presented by R. H. Meade, Esq., preserved in a saline solution of sulphate of magnesia; also a monograph on the Phalangidae by the same gentleman, and M. de Saussure's supplement to his monograph of the family Vespidae. Mr. Foxcroft sent a number of rare insects recently captured in Perthshire, with notes of the habits of a caterpillar found in ants' nests, apparently belonging to a species of Tinea. Mr. Westwood exhibited specimens of the young larvæ of Meloe which had been found hanging in clusters on Potato plants. Mr. S. Stevens exhibited a new and very remarkable Longicorn beetle recently brought from the Feejee islands by Mr. Macgillivray, forming the type of a new genus. Mr. F. Smith exhibited specimens of the rare ant Tapi-

noma erratica, several colonies of which had been found near London by Mr. F. Grant. Mr. Arthur Adams exhibited specimens of Drypta emarginata taken near Portsmouth; and Mr. Stanton a collection of drawings of the transformations of minute Lepidoptera from the collection of a Prussian amateur, including several very remarkable species. Mr. Hunter exhibited a specimen of Strauopus Fagi recently captured, and a number of young larvæ hatched from its eggs; and Mr. Jansen presented the rare Hypulus quercinus, captured near Colney Hatch, to the Society's collection. Mr. Curtis mentioned the circumstances connected with the capture of the blind beetles Anommatus and Langelandia at Paris, and also stated that Dr. Asa Fitch had recently informed him that the Hessian fly was at the present time committing fearful damage to the Wheat crops in North America, which he attributed chiefly to the failure of their natural enemies and parasites, and inquiring into the practicability of importing some of these useful species of insects. Mr. Westwood suggested that a far more practical plan would be the adoption of Professor Henslow's Wheat-midge sieves. A letter was read from Mr. Bates relative to the bird-feeding habits of a species of Mygale which he had observed in Brazil in crevices on the trunks of trees, thus confirming Madame Merian's statement, which had been disputed by Mr. MacLeay. Mr. Meads stated that from the observations of Mr. Blackwall the spider was not provided with a poisonous secretion. Mr. Edwin Shepherd, however, affirmed that toads had repeatedly been killed by large red spiders when shut up together. Mr. Newman read a description of the transformations of that common pest to horticulturists, the Otiorhynchus sulcatus, which he had observed to be very destructive in Ferneries. Captain Cox called the attention of the Society to the injury committed on the Lime trees in Hyde Park by the pretty little moth Tinea Linneella, and also on the Oak trees by Trochilium Cynipiformis, and suggested the advisability of the Society applying to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests on the subject. The president, however, considered there was little good to be apprehended from such a step at a time when Mr. Kennedy's dismissal from office had so recently taken place.

Notices of Books.

*Maxims and Hints on Angling, Chess, Shooting, &c.* (Murray's Railway Reading), is a reprint of Mr. Richard Penn's maxims on those subjects. As a veteran sportsman his dicta are never to be neglected; on this occasion their force is much increased by capital woodcuts from the pencil of Chantrey, Lee, and others. The following examples of Mr. Penn's sayings show that this is the railway book for sportsmen.

"Although you may be a very agreeable gentleman, generally speaking, you will have chosen an unlucky moment for making yourself particularly so, if on some fine morning after breakfast you should volunteer to accompany two of your friends who are preparing to leave the house for a day's partridge shooting without any expectation of being joined by a third person.

"When you are obliged to walk on the left-hand side of a man who carries the muzzle of his gun too low, do not be so very polite as to take no notice of this dangerous habit. He may, perhaps, appear quite offended at your venturing to question your perfect safety. But be that as it may, to be constantly stared at by the eyes of a double-barrelled gun is so awfully unpleasant, that your friend's looking rather cross is a matter of less consequence.

"When you are making your way through a thick wood with too large a party, it is better that you should be scolded by some of your friends for troubling them with very frequent notice of your individual locality, than that you should be shot by any of them from want of such notice.

"On the day of a great battue, if one of the party (not you) should shoot much better than the others, and this should by chance be talked of after dinner (as such matters sometimes are), do not say much about the very large number of hares and pheasants killed by you—on some other occasion.

"Never ask beforehand whether or not you are to shoot hares in the cover into which you are going, but never shoot one after you have been told not to do so.

"Many persons who are possessed of much information have a tedious and unconnected way of imparting it. Such men are like dictionaries, very instructive when opened in the right place, but rather fatiguing to read throughout.

"The foundation of good breeding is the absence of selfishness. By acting always on this principle—by using forbearance and moderation in argument, even when you feel sure that you are right, and by showing a becoming diffidence when you are in doubt, you will avoid many of the errors which men are apt to fall into. Reader, bear in mind that this holds good in all things, and not only in Fishing, Shooting, and Chess."

The Rev. Thos. Milner has produced a volume called *The Crimea, its ancient and modern history, &c.* (Longmans, small 8vo), which will be acceptable to the many who are unacquainted with the writings of continental authors. It gives an account of the original inhabitants of the Crimea, of its subsequent history, and of the events which brought it under Russian rule. The author, who appears to have been diligent in consulting