

sect apparitions—for in a few days they detached themselves from the stone, and began to roam about like other independent animals. Loathsome things they certainly were, for they belonged apparently to the genus *acarus*, which is famous for its ugliness, and which numbers some of the most nauseous parasites in creation in its ranks. But they continued to increase, and in the course of not many weeks at least a hundred were charmed into life. "How?" was the question. To this Mr. Cross attempted to give no decisive answer. "I have never ventured an opinion," said he, many years afterward, "on the cause of their birth, and for very good reason, I am unable to form one. The simplest solution of the problem which occurred to me was that they were from ova deposited by insects floating in the atmosphere and hatched by electric action. Still I could not imagine that an ovum could shoot out filaments, could become bristles, and moreover I could not detect on the closest examination remains of a shell. Again, we have no right to assume that electric action is necessary to vitality, until such fact shall have been distinctly proved. I next imagined that they might have originated from the water, and consequently made a close examination of numbers of vessels filled with the same fluid; in none of these could I perceive the trace of an insect, nor could I see any in any other part of the room."

The experiments were repeated in various ways, and with numerous precautions to prevent the introduction of extraneous matter. Still the insects appeared under circumstances which seemed to be totally adverse to the manifestations of animal life. They grew up beneath the surface of liquids in which they could not afterward exist. They did so in fluids which were caustic or absolutely poisonous. They were extracted apparently from materials which had been fused in a heat exceeding that of melted iron and from solutions poured while boiling into the apparatus. They were engendered under an atmosphere impregnated with chlorine or charged with muriatic gas. Similar experiments, too, were afterward undertaken by Mr. Waker, of Sandwich, who was still more solicitous, if possible, to exclude all foreign elements of

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