

by the weight of the stone. The damage is a considerable one, as the whole collection is again to be provided with new labels. A careful research led to the discovery of an insect belonging to the genus *Lepisma*, which lived in the boxes and cabinets. The old labels of common writing paper were never attacked, therefore it was to be presumed that the finish of the new labels was the attraction to the insects. Indeed, Professor C. L. Jackson found the new labels finished on both sides with starch, and without doubt the starch covering attracted the *Lepisma*. I was rather puzzled by this fact. It has been known for more than a century that the greatest library pest, *Anobium*, does not like starch. Therefore it was recommended to use in binding books only such paste as was made of pure starch without meal, of course also with the addition of several drugs of the most vicious odor; and now a new customer proves to prefer starch to other things. It is, by the way, a queer but very common association of ideas that substances with an unpleasant scent to man should also be unpleasant to insects. But the virtuous hater of Rockfort or Limbourg cheese would directly be disabused by discovering with a common hand lens a lively carnival of bugs in those disgusting dainties.

The *Lepisma* destructive to the labels is a true American insect, described by Professor Packard as *L. domestica*. It belongs to a small group of insects with the euphonious name *Thysanoura*, and there are half a dozen species known in the United States. The principal one found in Europe is the *L. saccharina*, better known as the Small Blue Silver-fish. This little insect is found in dark places or corners near provisions, running very fast, and being so soft that it is crushed by the lightest touch. In Europe it has always been considered, but without proof, as imported from America. It has been known there for more than 200 years, but its existence cannot be traced before the discovery of America. The whole body of the insect is covered with very fine iridescent scales, which have been used as a delicate test object for microscopes, and are the cause of its vulgar name, Silver-fish.

The earliest notice of the small European species is in R. Hooke's *Micrographia*, a folio, London, 1665. It was printed at the expense of the Royal Society, and is an account of innumerable things examined by the microscope. The book is still respected for the accuracy of the author's observations. Mr. Blades calls it most amazing for its equally frequent blunders. I have reason to suppose that the absurd blundering