extremity introduced through the incision into the abdomen, up to the spinners. The abdomen thus spitted is inserted into a large test-tube held over the flame of a candle, the preparation being constantly rotated till dry, avoiding the extremes of too much or too little heat—the firmness of the abdomen being tested every now and then with a fine needle, till it is so firm as not to yield to pressure; the front extremity of the pin is now cut off obliquely, and the point thus made inserted into the cephalo-thorax, the two halves of the body being thus again brought into apposition. The animal may then be mounted as usual. This method is stated by Mr. Thorell to preserve the appearance of animals almost entirely unchanged.—*Nature.*

MUMMIED BEETLES.—In the year 1835 the late Professor Audouin exhibited before the (French) Entomological Society a vase of red clay, resembling an orange in size and form, with a short neck, which had been taken from an ancient tomb at Luxor (the Egyptian Thebes). There was a slight fracture where the neck joined the body, and, on examination, the vase was found to be filled with a black lumpy matter, consisting entirely of the bodies of a small ptinoid beetle (Gibbium Scotias). The mass was quite compact, so that the number of beetles must have reached several thousands. How are we to explain the presence of such an enormous quantity of individulas of this species in a vase, into which they could not have themselves penetrated, because, previously to the fracture occurring, it was hermetically sealed? It is a problem which it is not easy to solve. M. Brulle who quotes the story in his "Histoire des Coleopteres," believes without doubt that the circumstance is connected with some superstitious usage of the ancient Egyptians. We leave to archæologists the task of appraising this theory at its proper value, which, if it be well founded, will go far to settle the difficulty.—(*Duponchel, "Dict. d'Hist. Nat."*) *Science Gossip.*

SPIDERS AND LARVÆ.—In the April part of *Science Gossip* is a query with the above heading, which I can answer in the affirmative. If Mr. Roberts wishes to see a spider thoroughly puzzled, let him put a leaf-rolling caterpillar into its web; the spider (provided the larva be proportionate to its own size) seizes it fearlessly and winds it up; but as fast as he winds, so fast does the larva slip out of its bonds, until it either escapes from the web altogether or gets weakened by the repeated bites of its adversary. The larva of a *Noctua* also astonishes a spider, from the fact that it cannot be made to lie still in the web, though wrapped in ever so many grave-clothes; when the spider has given it two or three bites, however, its activity decreases, when the spider sucks its juices at pleasure. The larvæ of certain species of *Lepidoptera* and *Hymenoptera* are distasteful to spiders, as I observed in a short paper read before the Entomological Society in March, 1869.—*A. G. Britten, British Museum (Scientific Gossip).*