

ON SOME OF OUR COMMON INSECT...

No. 15. THE IO MOTH—*Saturnia (Hyperchiria) Io*, Fabr.

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This lovely moth is well worthy a place in the cabinet of the collector, and is always sure to attract notice and admiration. The larva, of which fig. 27 represents a full-grown specimen, is of a most delicate apple or pea green colour, with a broad, dusky white stripe at each side, bordered with lilac on the lower edge. The body is covered with clusters of green bristles, tipped with black. These bristles are exceedingly sharp, and when the insect is handled, will produce a very irritating sting, similar to, but much sharper than that of the nettle, and the effect of which causes a reddening of the flesh and the immediate appearance of raised white blotches, which last for a considerable time.

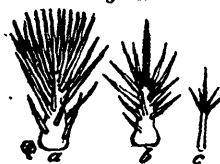
Fig. 27.



Fig. 28 shows the appearance of these bristles, some of them, as

♂, being stouter and more acute than the others, and able to inflict a sharper and more penetrating sting. According to Mr. Riley, the irritating property belongs to the substance of which the spines are formed, and his opinion was strengthened by the fact that the spines of a cast off skin, which had been in his cabinet for years, still retained the irritating power.

Fig. 28.



In the earlier stages the caterpillars are gregarious, feeding together side by side, and in going to and returning from their place of shelter, moving in regular files, like the processionary caterpillars of Europe (*Lasiocampa processionea*). When about half grown they