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It is a source of considerable gratification to the Council to notice that the demand for information from this important class of the community concerning insects injurious to crops or to stock is daily on the increase. Special arrangements have been made by which, during the coming season, those engaged in cultivating the soil will be encouraged not only to make use of the Society as a source of reference, but also to take systematic notes, under instructions to be sent out by the Council in the spring, of their own observations made on any insect pests occurring in their neighbourhood. It is hoped by this means to elicit much valuable information, and also, at the same time, to increase the number of practical entomologists among those to whom, more than anyone else, a knowledge of the science is most essential.

In these "Notes on Worms" no account will be found of the multifarious pests regarding which, under the name of "a worm," information is often asked of an entomologist from a beetle, an aphis, a mite, a centipede, an iulus, or a gordius, to larvæ of every description ; nor either of that mysterious creature at whose door as "the worm" so much harm is laid when the cause is not apparent or is not understood. I shall confine myself to a consideration of that lowly, and, for want of better knowledge, much despised member of the animal kingdom, the Earthworm, and shall endeavour to secure for it a greater amount of consideration, by bringing forward some of the more interesting points in its history, gleaned from all the published accounts I could find on the subject, as well as from observations made by myself on individuals kept in my study. Worms may, at first thought, seem to be strange pets, but to anyone who will take the trouble to secure a good sized worm and place it in a large, clear glass jar partially filled with damp earth, there are so many interesting and instructive experiments which can be made, that any trouble taken will be much more than repaid. I have now before me an enormous specimen, which I have had thus housed for some months ; when fully extended it measures nearly eighteen inches. From its large size it is, of course, much more easily examined than smaller specimens.

Worms "are by most people regarded as rather ugly, but harmless, wriggling things, slimy and disagreeable to touch, unsightly to look at, and about as destitute of interest as anything that lives, and moves, and has an independent existence. But all this is founded on a false estimate, and the false estimate is, as usual, founded on ignorance. The worm may almost be called a clever and intelligent creature; very shy indeed of letting its mode of action be seen, but showing by certain results, which readily come under our observation, that it has instincts which fall very little short of reasoning and design."—Prof. Paley, Science Gossip, 1878, p. 121.

"The idea of a worm of any kind is unpleasant to the refined taste, but there is nothing especially repugnant in the appearance of the earthworm." When a young lady, however, upturns one as she digs her flower bed, ten chances to one she will scream and run away, and dig no more that day; but, at the sight of it, her youthful brother has a beatific vision of a boat and a river, the bobbing of a cork, a struggle, the splashing of a broad tail in a leaky skiff; and the man with the microscope, as he passes by, takes it tenderly in the palm of his hand, and carries it into the house. Let us go in with him and see if he can find any item of interest in the anatomy of this humble dweller in the earth."—Dr. A. C. Stokes, in Field and Forest, III, p. 124.

Before passing on to the structure, or to the important work earthworms perform in the economy of nature, it may not be amiss to indicate the position these creatures hold in the animal kingdom.

From the historical introduction to a valuable report made to the British Association in 1851, by Dr. Thomas Williams, it would appear that this has been a point of considerable difficulty for naturalists to determine. Among the ancients the terms Vermes (a word conjugate with verto = to turn) and $\sigma\kappa\omega\lambda\eta\xi$ were used to denote, generally, all lower animals resembling in form the leech and the earthworm; this acceptation of the words prevailed down to the time of Lamarck. "The true zoological limits of the Annelida were only confusedly determined by the observers of nature, antecedently to the time of Pallas (1766). To the sagacity and industry of this maturalist, science is indebted for the first clear definition of the boundaries of this class" (p. 161). "Blumenbach it was who first observed that true worms are in no instance distinguished by the