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prized, when in captivity, by the Italians. The Hoopoe is one of the common migratory birds; it usually arrives from the African coast very fat, and we can, from experience, state it to be delicious eating when cooked in the Italian mode. The Little Wall-creeper (*Tichodroma muraria*), with its crimson wings, is one of the rarest birds, but is occasionally seen on the lofty walls of St. Peter's Church.

Among the insects of Italy, the Tarantula Spider and the Silkworm are equally celebrated. So much of fable and exaggeration has been mixed up with the history of the first, that it is difficult to separate truth from falsehood: it is even doubtful whether any spider of a decidedly venomous character truly exists in the country. During a residence of many years in different states of Italy, we never met with one answering such a description; and it is well known that the common people give this name indiscriminately to every large spider they happen to meet with. Much more real danger may be apprehended from a species of true Scorpion, which is by no means uncommon in damp houses; and our own specimen (fig.



Scorpion.

345.) we actually found one evening within our bed: its sting is venomous, and, we have heard, dangerous. May not the qualities of this insect have been exaggerated, and transferred to a spider? The Silkworm is too well known to require description. In some provinces, as Lower Calabria, &c., the insect is fed more upon the leaves of the red than on the white mulberry. It is not generally known that a species of true *Termite*, or White Ant, inhabits Sicily; it is found only in old houses: upon one occasion we discovered a nest established in a

portmanteau of clothes, most of which had been destroyed by the perforated labyrinths of these destructive creatures.

The domestic animals are not very remarkable; the climate, from its heat, being ill adapted for grazing. The common breed of oxen are among the largest known, and are furnished with horns of an immense size; but the animals are gentle, and much used for draught: there is also another race, principally found in Tuscany, much smaller and esteemed for its fine form and pure white colour; and these are exported both to Cuba and Jamaica. The insufficiency of pasture accounts for the scarcity of sheep; and this is so remarkable, that in some of the distant provinces mutton is considered rather unwholesome, and is rarely, if ever, brought to market. During many years' residence in southern Italy, we never saw this meat exposed for sale; and in the island of Sicily, sheep are nearly unknown. In the southern provinces the cheese, butter, and milk are derived from goats, which are kept in flocks of 100 or 150: they are driven out in the morning by the goatherd, and conducted to their pens towards sunset. The pigs are all of the long-legged, unimproved breed, and no care is taken in their fattening.

Sicily. The zoology of Sicily has been hitherto so little known, that we shall take this opportunity of briefly illustrating its peculiarities. The following remarks have been the result of personal observations, made during a long residence in this celebrated island.

The native quadrupeds, in former times, appear to have been much more numerous than they are at present: this diminution has not originated in the increase of population or of agriculture, for both of these, it is well known, have enormously retrograded since the splendid epoch of Sicilian history. The diminution of the larger animals originates in two causes: first, the scarcity of wood and shelter; and, secondly, the universal passion for shooting. The ancient forests of Sicily, which once sheltered the larger game, have been gradually diminishing; and the next century may possibly witness their total disappearance. The only fuel burnt throughout the island is wood and charcoal. Now, a Sicilian landed proprietor never thinks of planting any other trees than vines or olives; to benefit his estate for the sake of those who are to inherit it afterwards, never enters his imagination. With such a constant and universal demand for fuel, and with no measures being taken to provide a future supply, it may therefore be easily imagined that wood is already scarce. The vast forests of Etna, of which so much has been said, and which originally belted that stupendous mountain, have been so diminished in modern times, that they hardly exist but in name. In these regions immense quantities of charcoal are made, and sent to all parts of the island. Trees are felled every day, but not one is ever planted; in short, even in 1815, after the British troops had been in the island ten years, wood began to be so scarce, that their rations of fuel were principally brought from the opposite shores of Calabria.

The scarcity of wild animals originates also in another cause: every Sicilian peasant carries his gun as constantly upon his shoulder, as he does his cap upon his head; and he shoots at every thing. With but little shelter for retreat, or for breeding, and perpetually exposed to destruction by the gun, it is not surprising that Sicily in general should be as remarkable for its paucity of resident birds and quadrupeds, as it is for its naked unwooded appearance. Its scenery is grand and magnificent; but everywhere it is deficient in wood and water.

In former times, it appears that several wild animals, now seldom if ever seen, were met