

The usual colour of *Gordius* is black or dark brown, some are of a pale shade; but my specimen is of a very deep brownish black colour for the posterior  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches of its length, while for about  $\frac{7}{8}$ ths of its length, from the head, it is yellowish or olivaceous-brown. The attenuated head end is very pale in colour. The hind portion of the body is thicker than the anterior part. I notice that Grenacher describes a reverse coloration in specimens from the Philippine Islands, the head end being dark, while the hind portion of the body is a lighter shade of blackish-brown. *Mermis acuminata*, Leidy, a species of the genus *Mermidæ*, allied to the *Gordiidae*, is of a pale brown colour.

From what has been said, it is clear that the Hair-eels are widely distributed on this continent and in Europe, while Grenacher's studies were largely based on specimens brought by Carl Semper from the Philippines.

The zoological position and the details of their anatomy and structure have been matters about which high authorities have seriously disagreed. Grenacher refers at some length to the contradictory views held. As he states, one author describes a mouth-opening, others deny its existence; one states that the digestive canal is obsolete in the adult, another gives a detailed account of its various parts; one found a pair of secreting organs, others regard them as alimentary pores. The great Carl Gegenbaur speaks of an enteron or alimentary tube in the entoparasitic larva of *Gordius*, but declares that it so degenerates that the mouth disappears, the ingestion of food ceases, and the adult relies upon the store of food taken in during its earlier life as a parasite. In my specimen a mouth is certainly present, though there can be no ground for the statement of Captain Thomas Brown that "its bite, sometimes, inflicted on being taken out of the water, has been known to produce the complaint called whitlow." The further statement that Linnæus recorded it as a popular opinion in Sweden, and that the fact has since been confirmed by various other persons, may be passed over. The mouth of *Gordius* is too small and feeble to inflict a bite: it is a simple minute pore.