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## PRACTICAL ENTOMOLOGY.

### “MOSS-HUNTING.”

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Having had several enquiries addressed to me as to how I captured the Pselaphidæ, etc., a list of which appeared in the ENTOMOLOGIST of March, 1881, it has occurred to me that it might be acceptable to some of my entomological brethren to have a detailed account of my method of moss-hunting published in our organ.

First, then, as to gathering the moss. For pedestrian excursions, a game bag, or haversack, to sling over the shoulder, will be most convenient; where a vehicle is employed, a pillow case or grain bag may be used, and in either case a small hand rake about a foot long will be found very useful. As soon as the snow leaves the ground, the collector may seek some open swampy woods, where the ground is varied with little mounds by the decay of fallen trees or the upturned roots of wind-falls, which are overgrown with mixed mosses,—or the banks of a pond or creek, strewn with rotting logs and branches. The moss should be taken up in large flakes, with as little disturbance as possible, and packed tightly in the bag. It is of little use taking the moss which grows in thin sheets on the stumps and trunks of trees, as few insects will be found in it, and there is one sort which grows in compact oval bunches of a bright green, which I uniformly reject as barren. The most productive is that which grows on the ground, and is not less than an inch in length of stem. So long as the ground is clean of snow, a little frost is not objectionable, but rather the reverse, as some of my most successful collecting was done when the moss was pretty well frozen, and the pools were covered with ice strong enough to walk over; but whatever may be the weather, the moss must be damp,—insects will not live in dry moss.

Having brought a cargo home, the next step is to get out its living treasures, for which the following implements will be needed: 1. A sieve,