

The Rockwood Review.

the initiated ones add, that a number of these boleti grow to such a size in some instances, that one has been known to serve a family as condiment to two hearty meals! Yet in the drying effects of two or three days exposure to sun and wind, the puff-balls in the semi-organic interior change to snuff coloured dust.

A number of other species of the Fungi that are found growing in the forest (mostly in the trunks of prostrated trees in which the process of decay has begun), are sought for and eaten with avidity by Bovines that pasture in the wilderness, these gelatine or glue-like excrescences come out on the log surface after a warm summer rain, and in shape and colour resemble boiled tripe; when a herd of bush cattle come upon a "find" of these curious parasitic growths, the rivalry and pushing, and "goring" each other to obtain the lion's share of the "bonne bouche," is entertaining to a mere spectator to witness.

The numerous species of the Fungidie that one occasionally meets with in the forests, are a cause of wonder—some of most remarkable gay colours—as scarlet and orange, and also in many instances there is grace of form; fringes tassel-like, adorn the edges of some that cover the flat tops of tree stumps in a recent chopping, like a piece of carpeting of a uniform gay colour. These productions are of very rapid growth, a single sultry night in July causes some of them to appear, as if by magic, and their withering and decay is scarcely less rapid than their growth; and in few hours exposure to the heat and light of the sun, they shrink and become unsightly objects.

That malodorous toadstool the Phallus is occasionally stumbled upon among the tall grass and mildewing vegetation found near old rail fences. These may be often discovered by the swarms of blow

flies that are apt to hover near the Phallus clusters, as if attracted to decomposing animal substance.

Some of the Fungidie at a certain stage of decay, become phosphorescent; this phenomena we have frequently witnessed on a sultry summer's night, and it is apt to be more in evidence on the approach of thunder storms, or of a highly charged electric condition of the atmosphere; it is as if a state of negative electric tension was induced in the fungous substance by the positive currents with which the air seems charged at the time.

Some of the fungous excrescences found in the decaying debris of forests occasionally assume interesting but indescribable forms. Some assume to a monstrous satyr-like imitations of animal organization, as if crude efforts were made by nature to ascend into a higher stage of life than that to which these so called repulsive substances seem limited.

One remembers scarcely anything more spectacular or magnificent than the display made by myriads of fireflies in their curving and gyratory movements in the air over an open grassy swamp, or beaver meadow, on a dark and sultry night, about the 20th June; these coleopterous festivals are on a par with the beauteous orchestral gyrations of a swarm of gnats in the weak sunshine of an autumnal evening.

The firefly seems to have entire control of the illuminating machinery, and a continuous flash for a moment, whether at rest or on the curve of flight, seems to exhaust the charge or current in its battery or "accumulator." To light up or flash their light, seems a mere muscular effort, and as much under the insects control as extending its wings or moving its legs. Like our small glow-worm, if captured unhurt, they seem to take the sulks, and refuse to display their "incandescent" for a time, but after a longer or shorter pause, light up the cathode, as if to find out "where