

A few weeks ago, during a short holiday at Fort William, P. Q., on the Ottawa River, about 120 miles above the Capital, I noticed examples in a pond about a mile from the Fort. A week later in a sand-pool, 6 or 8 inches across, which had been dug by some children the evening before, I obtained a specimen. In this newly excavated pool, only an inch or two deep, and thirty or forty yards from the Hotel Pontiac, the hair-eel appeared actively undulating and twisting about in characteristic fashion. Grenacher's paper "Zur Anatomie der Gattung Gordius" happened to be in my hands at the time, and I resumed the study of this curious creature after the lapse of many years.

Villot's monograph ("Monographie des Dragonneaux"), in which a detailed account of *Gordius* is given, had also been recently consulted by me.

My specimen was almost exactly 12 inches in length and a little over  $\frac{1}{5}$  of an inch in thickness. Its smooth hard hair-like body, without distinctive head, and its uncanny contortions, suggested, at once, an animated horse-hair. It was engaged unceasingly in winding itself into endless gracefully curved knots, and as constantly unwinding itself. The Gordian knot of classical tradition was not more tortuously twisted, and the generic name *Gordius* seems very appropriate.

Observations have shown that these creatures will survive if removed from water and dried. Doubt has been cast on the somewhat venerable story that the Abbé Fontana kept a hair-eel in a drawer for three years, and that at the end of that time it was dry and hard, and exhibited no sign of life; but, on putting it into water, it very soon recovered its former vigorous activity. On the authority of the distinguished Professor Alexander Macalister, this traditional story is confirmed. "They are remarkable," he says, "for their tenacity of life, as they can be dried into hard, brittle threads, and yet appear lively and active on being moistened." Some author, whose name I cannot just now recall, tells of a museum curator who observed a hair-eel emerge from the body of a beetle which had long been killed, dried, and put away in a cabinet.