

one of our domestic mice. In winter it is sometimes found on the snow; its fur is then silky and glossy."

The common mouse (*Mus musculus*) is said to be very common in houses at Erzeroom.

The Spalax (*Spalax typhlus*, Illig.), a specimen of which is also sent, is said to be "common all over the plain. Its food is roots, but it will readily eat bread: its paws are thick and fleshy: it is very expert in burrowing, which it performs with all four of its feet. The pericardium is excessively thin and transparent, and without any traces of fibrous texture. The left lung is entire, and the right one divided into four lobes; heart, pancreas and kidneys, natural; peritoneum of exactly the same structure and appearance as the pericardium; liver five-lobed, with a small appendix; a large thick, round blotch (resembling an ulcer) on the inner surface of the great curvature of the stomach; spleen narrow, very much elongated, and adhering to the posterior and left side of the stomach; *capsulæ renales* firmly attached to the upper end of the kidneys; cæcum and *appendix vermiformis* of an enormous size, in proportion to the intestines: between the rectum and bladder a flat white substance, of a follicular structure, and terminating at its posterior extremity in a thick fleshy canal. Native name, *Kior-Seetchán* (Blind Rat)."

MISCELLANEOUS.

BOTANICAL INFORMATION.

"*Unio Itineraria*."

BELIEVING that many readers of the Annals of Natural History are unacquainted even with the existence of the Society whose notice is now about to be laid before them, it may not be amiss in the first place just to give a concise account of its simple organization and government before making known the Report of its present operations and progress; both the Report and the short account thereto prefixed have been translated and carefully abridged from the printed circular of the Society and from the file of correspondence received by their London agent from the Secretaries, Drs. Steudel and Hochstetter: the latter—the correspondence—comes down to the 20th March, 1840.

Abstract from the laws of the Society:—

"1. The Wurtemberg Natural History Travelling Union, generally known among botanists as the '*Unio Itineraria*,' consists in a society of the friends of natural history (especially botany), who at their general expense send out and support travellers and collectors of specimens illustrative of natural history, chiefly botanical, in the

most interesting, little known, and far distant parts of the world, under the superintendence of directors, secretaries, &c.

“ 2. The introduction to this Society is open without limitation to amateurs and collectors generally ; its only conditions are the subscribing a fixed sum for one or more shares (or even portion of shares) in each or any of the announced expeditions ; such sum to be paid at the time of entering the application, &c.

“ 3. Each subscriber may bespeak either a larger or smaller share in the anticipated proceeds of any given enterprise as may suit his wishes or convenience, recollecting, however, that the most liberal and extensive supporters have the first claim for the most complete collections, &c.”

The above appears to give a sufficient intimation as to the general rules of the Society, which, however, extend to seven principal enactments.

Report of the present position of the Society and its enterprises : the latter, now in progress, extend to three principal expeditions, viz. :—

First, That confided to Wilhelm Schimper into Abyssinia. Of this a portion of the dried plants is now being distributed into sets for the subscribers under the eye of the secretaries at Esslingen, who report that the first delivery will (it is hoped) be ready in about two months' time ; this will include the plants collected up to the close of the year 1837, and contains *many* genera entirely new to European botanists, and about *one-half* of the number of species will also, it is believed, prove new and undescribed. The seeds have already arrived, and are by this time in the hands of the various subscribers in Europe ; they consist of small packets of 100 species, and some few sets are made up of 200 species.

Second, Kotschy's journey into Southern Nubia, Cordofan, Faskokel, &c., is looked upon by botanists with scarcely less interest than the former one by Schimper into Abyssinia, embracing as it does a most extraordinary region, and one whose botany is at present almost entirely unknown, with the exception of some small previously obtained collections made by the same traveller a few years ago, and which, being offered for sale at Vienna, were eagerly purchased. Intelligence from Theodore Kotschy is now anxiously looked for, as none has been received of a very recent date. That already possessed by the Society warrants them in earnestly inviting more subscribers to come forward and support this most deserving and courageous young man in an expedition of no ordinary interest and

importance, which indeed will form a continuation or supplement nearly allied to that of Schimper. It is in the full expectation of a part of Kotschy's collections being received at Esslingen from this traveller in the course of the present year that the directors of the Society feel themselves warranted in requesting new members to subscribe for shares from so low as 30 to 60 florins (3*l.* 3*s.* to 6*l.* 6*s.* sterling) or upwards, according to the portion they may wish to secure. The subscription price is fixed at the same as Schimper's was, viz. 15 florins (1*l.* 11*s.* 6*d.* sterling) per 100 species.

Third, Welwitsch, who has been despatched to the Azores and Cape de Verde islands, and whose collections (including the plants he gathered during his detainment at Lisbon, and which are themselves far from inconsiderable) are shortly expected to arrive. A single share for this expedition is stated at 24 florins.

* * The Society still have at disposal to Non subscribers a few collections from the former expeditions, viz. Georgio-Caucasian, North American, and Egyptio-Arabian, at from 15 to 25 florins per century.

9, Queen-street, Soho-square, London,
May 1st, 1840.

NOTE ON *ARGULUS FOLIACEUS*, JURINE. BY WM. THOMPSON,
VICE-PRES. NAT. HIST. SOC. OF BELFAST.

Belfast, Oct. 29, 1838.—In our market today I had the pleasure of detecting one of these very interesting and handsome parasites attached to the dorsal fin of a *Salmo Trutta*, about a foot in length. The *Argulus* is $3\frac{1}{2}$ lines long, is a female, and in addition to the ova exhibits at the base of the tail the dark green spots ("noirs," Desm. Consid. Gen. Crust., p. 332), which are considered to mark this sex. Although the fish to which it was attached had been for some hours out of the water, the *Argulus* held so firmly by its two disks that I had some difficulty in detaching it without injury. For about ten minutes it was wrapped in a piece of dry paper, and then placed in a vessel of water in which salt had been dissolved until it was to the taste like strong sea-water*. This was no sooner done, than my pretty captive, after drawing her last pair of feet together several times†, thus calling to mind the common house

* This was done in consequence of my having been told that the fish was taken in the sea; the stomach, however, contained the remains of fresh-water insects (according to my friend A. H. Haliday, Esq., to whose inspection they were submitted), which possibly might have been washed into the sea and there obtained, but this is by no means probable.

† I observed this repeatedly done afterwards—they seem to be rubbed against the caudal plates.



1840. "Botanical information." *Annals of natural history* 5, 219–221.
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