

I. *Part of a Letter from Mr. Benjamin Bullivant, at Boston, in New England; to Mr. James Petiver, Apothecary, and Fellow of the Royal Society, in London. Concerning some Natural Observations he had made in those Parts.*

S I R,

THE last I address'd to you, was by our ingenious Friend Mr. *Trott*, who went hence in *October*; I have since received from you Mr. *Josselin's* Book of *New England Rarities*, and observe him to be short, but nervous. I cannot now make any descant on your Observations upon him, only this, that I made the same Remark you do, about the *Plague of the Back*, that it is greatly distant from an *Empyema*. I have tasted it more than once personally, it seems more of a *Collick*, yet is undoubtedly a *Nervous Dolour*. The Country People have learned of the *Indians* to steep *Castoreum* in *Rum*, and so cure it.

As to the *Fire-Flies*, I took several of them in *July* last, I take them to be a *Glow-Worm Volant*; the Lustre is plac'd as in a *Glow-Worm*. Kill the Fly (as I have done) and you find the *Scintilla* a small Jelly like Substance, the which separated into Atoms, gives still, in the Dark, a proportionable Lustre, to the Magnitude of each Atom.

I saw *Butterflies Eggs* that were testaceous, and near as big as a *Wrens*, most gloriously bestudded with *Gold* and *Silver*; at *Road Island* the Mowers find them in the *Grass*, and they hatch in the *Windows*, and are a Sport for Children.

Tortoises

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Tortoises are *Amphibious*, I have found their Eggs by Ponds Sides, in great Quantities, they are without Shells, like those in a Hens Belly ; our Dames scruple not to use them as Hens Eggs in Puddings.

Grashoppers, in dry Years, are a Plague to the Husbandmen : That on some Islands they have put Multitudes of *Turkeys* to destroy them ; they are prodigious in Quantity, of a Grey Colour, and about Three Inches long ; in *July* become Volant, and have a kind of Regimental Discipline, and as it were, some Commanders, which shew greater and more splendid Wings than the Commoners, and rise first when they are pursued by the *Fowls*, or by the Foot of the Traveller, which I have often seriously remarked.

The *Hum-bird* I have shot with Sand, and had one some Weeks in my keeping. I put a Straw for a Perch into a *Venice Glass Tumbler*, ty'd over the Mouth with a Paper, in which I cut Holes for the Bird's Bill (about as long and as small as a Taylor's Needle) and laying the Glass on one Side, set a Drachm of Honey by it, which it soon scented, and with its long Tongue put forth beyond its Bill, fed daily ; it muted the Honey pure, and was a Prospect to many Comers ; it flew away at last.

We have a *Frog* as big as a *Penny Loaf*, its Cry's exactly like a *Bull*.

I have examined the *Clam*, he hath a *Plain Pipe* or *Proboscis*, from whence he ejects Water, if compressed.

Boston in New England,

Jan. 15. 1697.