

is made of Yew, and the Stone is not inserted into the Handle at Right Angles, but makes an acute Angle below towards the Hand; the Use of which appears at first Sight. I am,

My LORD,

Your most obedient,

Humble Servant,

ROBERT CORKE.

VI. *A Letter from the Revd Mr. Griffith Hughes, Minister of St. Lucy's Parish in Barbadoes, to Martin Folkes, Esq; Pr. R. S. concerning a Zoophyton, somewhat resembling the Flower of the Marigold.*

S I R,

Read Nov.
10. 1743.

HOWEVER surprising the Description of a Flower, which I believe is in Reality an Animal, may appear; yet we cannot, without the highest Arrogance, presume to prescribe Limits to the Power of the ALMIGHTY, who, for wise Ends, sometimes hides his Works in such Darknes, as to be concealed from the most exalted human Knowledge. There are no Ages past, in which fresh and almost numberless Instances of his wonderful Works have not discovered themselves. And what, in ours, seems most inexplicable, will, possibly, appear to Futurity, no more than the natural

tural Consequence of other Discoveries then become familiar.

The following Description of an Animal, which, after Three Years repeated Observation, I always found unvaried in its Appearance, had perhaps been still the Subject of my own silent Admiration, if I had not been lately persuaded by a worthy Member of your Honourable SOCIETY to lay it before you, as I now beg Leave to do.

At the North End of the Island of *Barbadoes*, in *St. Lucy's* Parish, is a Cave about 14 Feet long, and 11 wide: Its Bottom is a Bason always full of transparent Salt-water, its greatest Depth about Three Feet: In this Bason there is a Stone of about Four Feet long, and Three in Breadth, always covered with Water. From small Holes in the Sides of this Stone, at different Depths under Water, appear in full Bloom, at all times of the Year, several seemingly fine radiated yellow Flowers, with thick-set distinct *Petala**: These Flowers, upon the Approach of my Fingers, or when disturbed by any thing else that came within Two or Three Inches of them, would in an Instant close all their Leaves together, and the Flower, Stalk and all, would shrink back into the Cavity of the Stone: Yet, if undisturbed for the Space of a few Minutes, they would again come in Sight,

* At first Sight this Species of Animals greatly resembles the Flower of the *Marigold*, but is of a paler yellow. I take it to be a sort of *Urtica marina*, of which *Gesner* has given Descriptions and Figures in his Book *de Aquatilibus*; but a Figure very nearly resembling this above described, is to be seen in *Johnston*, Hist. Nat. *de Exanguibus aquaticis*, Tab. XVIII. C. M.

and by degrees expand their Leaves, and appear in their former Beauty. From such an Appearance at first I could give it no other Name but that of a sensitive Flower; especially when I once saw several *Stamina*; but without *Apices*, rise up from the Socket of the Flower. Yet no sooner had these appeared to give me the Idea of a perfect Flower, but that replete with Animal Life, if Motion, and a Capacity of Self-preservation may be called such; these Claws, or Arms, which I must no longer call *Stamina*, darted from one Side of the Flower to another, and about its Verge, with a quick Motion, as if in Search of Prey. What further confirmed me in this Opinion, was, that I observed these Claws, when in Motion, to be jointed, and that they would often close together, as so many *Forcipes*; though their Appearance was but for a short time, soon retreating and disappearing again in the Socket of the Flower. As this seems to me, if it is allowed to be an Animal, to be its manner of taking its Prey, I leave it to the Judgment of others to consider whether, as these radiated Leaves can in an Instant close, with a strong elastic Force, to avoid Danger, they may not also when the Prey is brought within their Circle, be of Use to confine and secure it in their Embrace, till it is conveyed to the Mouth; which I suppose to be in the Socket, of what I have at first called a Flower. The Top of the Stone, out of which these seeming Flowers do grow, is covered over with Clusters of Water-bottles, that resemble unripe Grapes. Among these I found also several small blue Flowers, resembling the yellow ones in their Form and other Qualities.

—Having

—Having thus given you, Sir, the Description of this surprizing Appearance, and that with the utmost regard to Truth, I beg Leave to subscribe myself,

S I R,

Mile-End, London,
Nov. 3. 1743.

*Your most obedient,
Humble Servant,*

Griffith Hughes.

See T A B. III. Fig. 1.

VII. *A Letter from the Reverend Mr. Roger Pickering, V. D. M. to Cromwell Mortimer, M. D. Secr. R. S. concerning the Seeds of Mushrooms.*

S I R, Deptford, Oct. 31. 1743.

*Read Nov.
10. 1743.*

THE last time but one I had the Pleasure of your Company, I took the Liberty of mentioning some Conjectures of mine upon the Propagation of Mushrooms, together with some Observations; which I had already made. I was always of Opinion, that these Plants had their Seeds, as well as others; and attributed the not discovering it hitherto, to the Shortness of this Plant's Duration, and to its succulent and loose Contexture, whereby it is liable to immediate Putrefaction from the least Alteration of Weather. I could no otherwise account for the Method made use of by the *Italians*, who make Mushroom-beds in their Cellars, with a Mixture

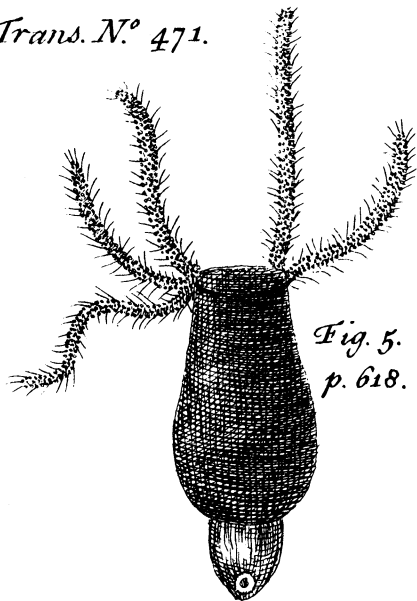


Fig. 5.
p. 618.

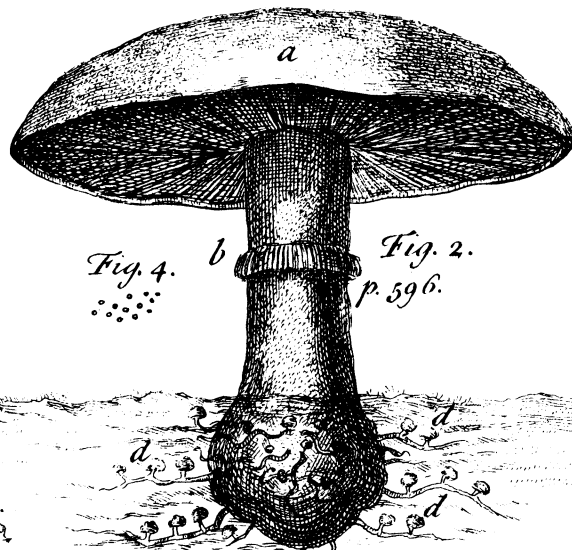


Fig. 2.
p. 596.

Fig. 3.
a
b



Fig. 1. p. 591.